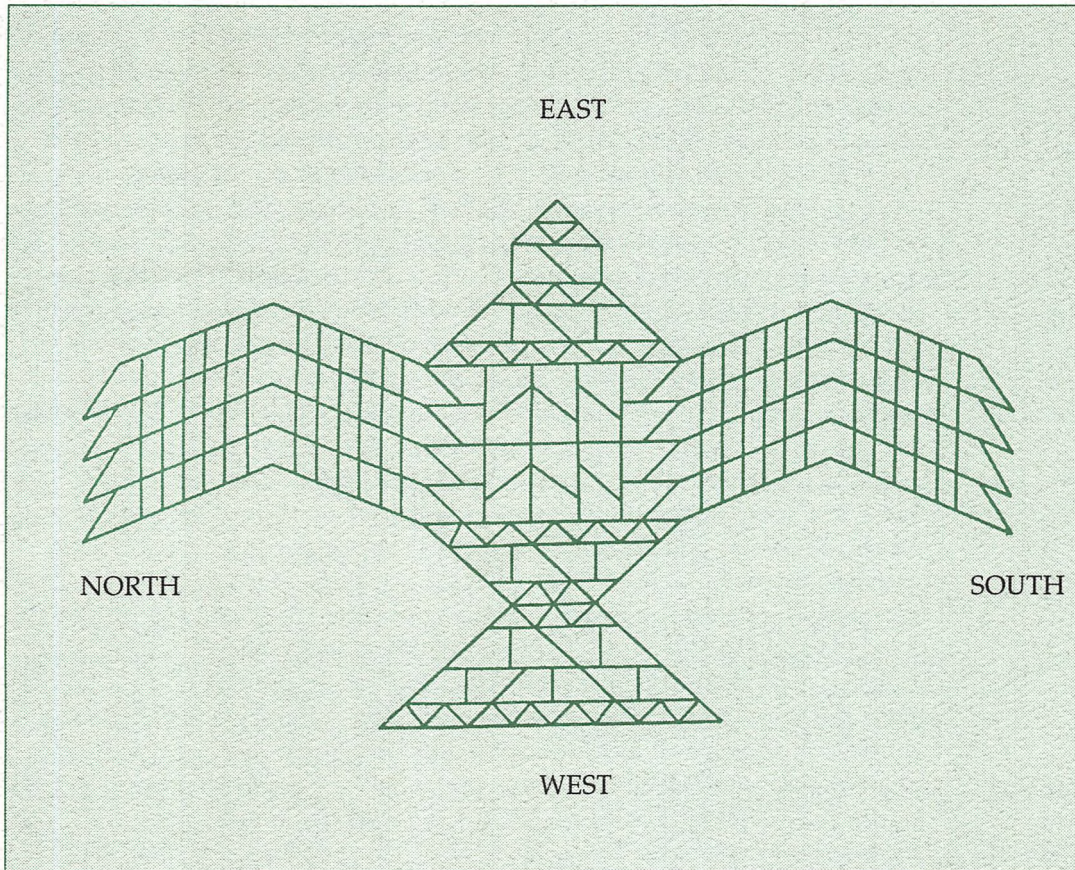


THE ECLECTIC THEOSOPHIST

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Winter 1993



The Astronomy of the Vedic Altars and the ṚgVeda

SUBHASH C. KAK

(Reprinted from *Mankind Quarterly*. Subhash C. Kak is a professor at Louisiana State University, Computer Engineering Department.)

1. Introduction

It was recently shown (Kak 1991) that the design of certain Vedic fire altars represented astronomical facts. The fire altar was used to represent certain features of the equivalence between the elements of the macrocosmos and microcosmos, that played a central role in Vedic thought. Altar designs are sketched in the *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* and the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, two early Vedic texts.

A considerable part of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* deals

with altar construction in the agnicayana rite. Agnicayana altars are supposed to symbolize the universe. The gārhapatya altar represents the earth (ŚB 7.1.1.13), the dhiṣṇya hearths represent space (ŚB 7.1.2.12), and the āhavanīya altar represents the sky (ŚB 8.2.1.2). This last altar is made in five layers. The sky is taken to represent the universe, therefore it includes space and earth. The first layer represents the earth, the third space, and the fifth the sky. The second layer represents the joining of the earth and space, whereas the fourth layer represents the joining of space and sky. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (10.4.3.9) declares that (astronomical)



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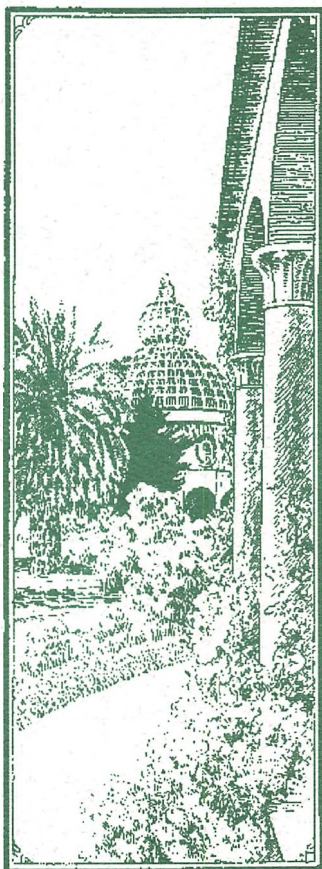
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*Every time the wind blows it is singing you a song of the gods.
Every time a flower blossoms it is bringing you a message from the higher law.
Every time you hear the ocean as it beats against the shore and recedes in musical rhythm,
it is speaking to your soul—a voice from Nature, verily a voice from God.
The magnitude, the grandeur of these things, the possibilities folded within them—
these can truly be sensed only in the silence.*

—Katherine Tingley (Theosophy: The Path of the Mystic)



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p. 91 & fn.). Kālacakra, because of its close association with *The Secret Doctrine*, forms an integral part of the Eastern School curriculum, with the reading of the original texts in Sanskrit and Tibetan scheduled in the sixth and seventh years. The regular performance of the full Kālacakra sādhanā as world service is a major goal of Eastern School. *This curriculum was offered 1984-86. Eastern School is a non-profit educational organization. There are no fees. Eastern School is supported solely by voluntary contributions. Eastern School, 3185 Boyd Rd., Cotopaxi, Colorado 81223.*

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Physics. He has held several fellowships and research grants in a variety of fields. He was the Founding Director of the Threshold Award for Integrative Knowledge, and is currently Adjunct Professor of Physics and Professor and Chairman of Comparative Religion at Dalhousie University, Halifax, Canada. . . . The Hindu Tradition, Christian Monasticism, Zen, Krishnamurti and Gurdjieff are among his main sources of spiritual influence.)

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IN MEMORIAM

As we go to press we have learned of the sudden passing of Renate Behrenbeck into the Peace and Rest called death. Her illness was brief as we understand she had been with her sister Irmgard Scheithauer until then working on the new book catalog prepared for Arbeitskreis Unterlengenhardt (Theosophical Society, Berlin, Germany), and as editor of *Theosophischer Korrespondenz-Brief* (the last issue of the latter had just reached us for February 1994). Her passing is a great loss to our friends in Germany, especially in Berlin, and our best thoughts go to Irmgard and all the devoted members there.

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UNIVERSAL PERSPECTIVE

Toward the Mystic East

John R. Beaver

While on a horseback journey which meant a day and night across a desert in the north of Chile, we made a halt for an hour's rest, my two attendants and I, and lying in the open, with nothing but sand for miles and miles around and a gorgeous sky above—the vastness, the solitude, the silence compelled meditation.

At 10,000 feet above sea-level, on a desert without foliage or even a blade of grass, the atmosphere is clearer than crystal, dry, penetrable beyond conception at lower levels.

Stretched comfortably upon the accommodating sand and gazing vertically into the heavens, the sight entranced and the thrill of admiration approached to ecstasy; for through that limpid ambient I could see farther into the vast dome of moonless sky, farther than these eyes you see had ever seen before. Myriads of stars that twinkled and myriads more beyond, that seemed at first imaginary, resolved into pin-points of scintillating worlds and worlds of light. The Southern Cross no longer cast the usual spell, and the black grave at its foot no longer called for wonder, for I could see away beyond through limitless space, till the dark purple merged with the inky foreground of imponderable infinitude.

Vainly did I strain to see still farther on, but I had found my limitation and was afraid. 'Twas the despair of wistful helplessness, and the thought I once had read came to my mind: "Gaze and it is magnificent; gaze on and it is wondrous; gaze on and it is awesome; gaze on and it is ghastly."

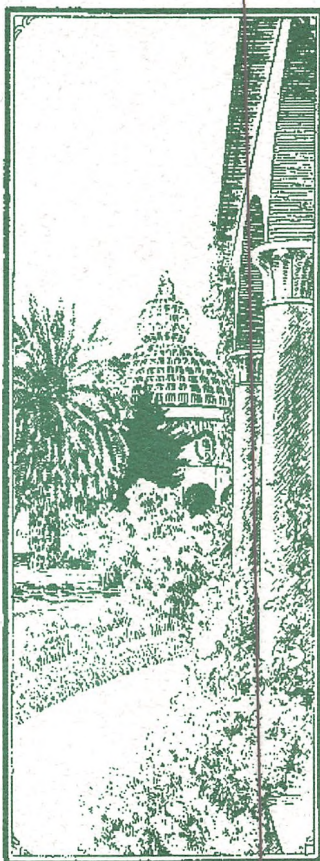
I did not find it ghastly. Awesome yes, but magnificent.

The astronomer who had found it ghastly had looked through the lifeless crystal of his lens to investigate the scientific problems of the Cosmos, while I was looking through the naked eyes of longing, longing to find where I belonged in the same bewildering scheme of things. And I went on thinking: Who inspired within this human breast this longing to solve the secret of his existence and its purpose? If I look in the opposite direction of immensity I find the same imponderable infinitude in minuteness, that passes beyond the scope even of imagination, into infinite nothingness.

Why, when we contemplate the ultra-microscopic, do we feel so big, and so puny when we gaze toward the ultra-telescopic? Is it perchance because the microscope hints at a long-forgotten past and the telescope at an undreamed-of future? Are we then on the Path that leads to Light, out of the darkness we have passed?

*Every time the wind blows it is singing you a song of the gods.
Every time a flower blossoms it is bringing you a message from the higher law.
Every time you hear the ocean as it beats against the shore and recedes in musical rhythm,
it is speaking to your soul—a voice from Nature, verily a voice from God.
The magnitude, the grandeur of these things, the possibilities folded within them—
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The Rainbow Bridge

FRANCIS MERCHANT

Norse mythology informs us that a rainbow bridge called Bifrost extends from the earth to heaven, that is, from Midgard to Asgard. Upon the path of light, the gods travel; ordinary mortals are unable to journey there.

This myth contains a message for modern man. He stands in a labyrinth, gropingly seeking to find his way upon the twisting and turning path. As long as he confines himself to the dimensions of his predicament, he will continue wandering in the maze. Should he become disenchanted with the conflicting circumference of his limited world and turn his attention to the bridge that leads upward to another dimension of con-

sciousness, then will he find that darkness is slowly dissipated by ever-increasing light.

Journeying across the rainbow, however, demands a changed perspective. Long must a man struggle within the tomb of matter before the vision appears. Having seen it, he must gain the courage to step from the solidity of earth to the airy insubstantiality of the fragile bridge of light. Defying gravitation, he must journey upon the lighted way across the vault of the sky to the ramparts of the world of fire. From the solid earth, he must rise to the domain of light. When this has been achieved, he becomes aware of the aureate quintessence that we associate with divinity.

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Every man has it within his power to construct his own rainbow bridge. Not very many appear to be interested in this feat of spiritual engineering. Horizontally man tends to strive, tumultuously rushing back and forth in exuberant abandon; rather seldom does the vertical vision command his allegiance. Yet, the path of the rainbow is one of radiant beauty. It leads from darkness to light, and from the unreal to the Real.

A second myth—this time from Egypt—casts light upon the subject. It deals with the antagonism between Osiris, representative of the principle of light, and Set, the obscuring force of darkness. Set prepares a feast, and invites Osiris. At the repast, Set proposes a game. A coffin is brought into the middle of the room, and various guests are invited to place themselves in it in order to determine whether the frames fit the casket. One guest after another tries, but no one has the appropriate dimensions. Some are too long, others too short, still others too corpulent. Finally, Osiris is asked to make the attempt. No sooner is he stretched supine in the coffin than Set quickly slams shut the lid, imprisoning the victim. Set had deliberately fashioned the coffin according to the ascertained dimensions of Osiris.

The casket containing the form of Osiris is then cast into a great sea. It sinks league upon league until it comes to rest at the bottom. The wrath of Set is not appeased, however. Fearful that Osiris will be found and resurrected, Set dismembers the body, cutting it into numerous pieces. These parts he scatters widely, hiding them with great care.

At this point Isis, the sister of Osiris, enters the scene. Mourning the fate of her brother, she wanders from place to place in search of the fragmentary remains of his body. She succeeds in her quest. One member after the other is found until the sundered body is one more whole.

How, then, shall we interpret this strange myth? Set represents the forces

of division and disintegration. Osiris typifies humanity. The coffin symbolizes the physical body. Incarnation is dramatically expressed by the trapping of Osiris in the casket, and his precipitation into the fluctuating seas of time. Isis is the soul that seeks to integrate the dismembered parts into unity.

The first myth deals with the achievement of a unitary state of consciousness. The rainbow bridge represents the process that leads to the dominance of the entire nature by the spiritual will. The second myth tells us of the sundered condition of the human psyche, the disjunction of elements in divisive isolation. Together, they present two phases of man's psychic history.

Osiris typifies the human psyche struggling in the seas of illusion—dimly conscious that integration is a possibility, yet finding itself in a state of disunion and dismemberment. The task of Isis is that of everyman, namely, the binding together of isolated fragments into a meaningful unity. Success in this endeavor constitutes the construction of the rainbow bridge that leads from the darkness of separation and division to the spheres of abiding light.

Let us consider these myths in relation to their applications in the domain of human behavior.

THE DISMEMBERMENT OF THE PSYCHE.

Physically, we readily perceive the value of coordination. Lack of muscular coordination results in obvious disability. A bit subtler is the lack of correlation between the emotions and the mind. Indicative of the different rates at which various phases of human nature develop are the well-known terms: chronological age, emotional age, and mental age. It is generally acknowledged by psychologists that a person may be physically mature,



but mentally quite undeveloped; or mentally alert, but emotionally retarded.

Lines of cleavage representing pulls in opposite directions abound in human nature. A man may be torn by the desire to remain true to his ideals and the impulse to accumulate a hoard of money by questionable means. The tug of pleasure may conflict with the prompting of duty. Self-aggrandizement may be opposed to community welfare.

Other cleavages are equally significant. Sleep, for example, constitutes a break in the continuity of consciousness, an interruption of the flow of thought. Death represents the greatest gap of all in the functioning awareness; hence it is so greatly feared.

In the state of ignorance, a condition of primitive unity is manifested. Instinct functions to preserve life and dictate choices. Conflict and cleavage are reduced to a minimum; they exist only in potentiality. Reason sleeps, and the opposition of contrary choices is locked up in the deeps of consciousness. The animal stage affords us many examples of this instinctual form of consciousness.

The emergence of reason and conscious choice is a capital event in the evolution of the individual unit of life. Although the mind is a priceless gift, it presents knotty problems. The unity of instinct is superseded by duality of emotion and intellect. Choices must be made, and discrimination learned. Right and wrong, truth and falsehood, the beautiful and the ugly, the prompting of the body and the impulses of the soul—these are some of the contraries that the awakening of the intellect brings into focus. In consequence, this stage is characterized by tension—tension that first produces cleavage, and eventually leads to unity at a higher level of awareness. The strains involved are the inevitable concomitant of the expanding intellect. Persons who pass through this stage are subjected to intense pressures that seem to rend them—but that in reality stretch consciousness to the dimensions of an

integrating wholeness.

The resolution of the agonizing tensions culminates in the reintegration of the sundered elements of the psyche. Without these searing pressure, dissonance cannot be converted into consonance. Just as a violin string must be tautened before a lovely melody is produced, so too must tension be applied to the personality before the psyche can be creatively harmonized. To avoid such pressures is to impede progress; the art of employing them creatively is the desired acquirement. The wise use of tension thus becomes of fundamental importance in the integration of the psyche.

The unity of ignorance thus passes into the complexity and diversity of intellect; beyond that lies another sense of unity that we associate—to use a word of many definitions—with the intuition. The gap between ignorance and intellect has been largely bridged; that between intellect and intuition remains.

The path that joins the peak of intellect to the summit of intuition has been dramatically portrayed in Zoroastrian literature. In these writings we are told that the Chinvad Bridge has one end placed in this world, and the other in the realms of light. The nature of the bridge is a function of consciousness; it is seen through the prism of man's awareness, and hence presents to each person a different aspect.

"That bridge," we read, "is like beam on many sides of whose edges there are some that are broad, and there are some that are thin and sharp; its broad sides are so large that its width is twenty-seven reeds, and its sharp sides are so contracted that in thinness it is like the edge of a razor. And when the souls of the righteous and the wicked arrive, it turns to that side which is suitable to their necessities, through the great glory of the creator, and the command of him who takes the just account. Moreover, the bridge becomes a broad bridge for the righteous, as much as the height of nine spears...; and it becomes a narrow bridge for

the wicked, even unto a resemblance to the edge of the razor."

This bridge, then, is built in consciousness, and he who fails to construct it can establish no communication between the various elements of his psyche. In such cases the emotions may be at variance with the intellect, and the latter unaligned with the intuition of the soul. Anomalous behavior is the result. Friction develops, and the individual finds himself driven by profound psychic forces of which he remains unaware. The struggle to become conscious of the tides that flow beneath the surface of daily existence enables him to gain a sense of direction; without the experience of rending conflict, he finds himself a puppet of the unconscious, a blind channel for the forces that sweep him into unthinking activity.

TENSION, CLEAVAGE AND CRISIS.

The transition from instinct to intellect necessarily produces a series of tensions; and the same may be said of the passage from intellect to intuition. As a matter of fact, the lives of human beings may be analyzed in terms of dominant tensions that are at work.

From the acceptance of a life-objective, significant tensions flow. The search for pleasure yields its appropriate pressures; so does the pursuit of wealth; fame, power, self-aggrandizement—all invoke stresses and strains that affect the individual.

A change of focus involves a change of tension. The inwardly established life-focus determines the nature of the outwardly felt pressures. Just as the Chinvad Bridge assumes a shape in accordance with the predisposition of the psyche, so too do experiences reveal themselves to us in terms of the primary life-focus.

This life-focus, then, produces tension; the latter results in cleavage, a state of mind that flows into crisis; the decision that this stage demands can lead to a resolution of duality and the achievement of a higher condition of unity.

The wise use of tension is of the greatest importance in the binding together of the sundered elements of the psyche. Just as tremendous pressures transform a simple piece of coal into a glowing diamond, so do many applied stresses of life call forth the radiance that sleeps in man. The ability of a person to withstand tension is a measure of his achievement; this resistance, however, may find expression either as a breasting of the tides of evolution, or an opposition to the clutch of material things that would clog his feet as he steps forward on the rainbow bridge. Motive is consequently a prime factor.

The human experience is by its very nature productive of tension. Great souls down the ages have been subjected to it. In fact, every achievement involves the attainment of a new point of tension. Moreover, the strains will increase rather than diminish in the future.

A brief enumeration of the stresses to which the human being is subjected may serve to indicate the role they play. Education is very largely a matter of stretching the dimensions of the mind by the introduction of ideas; marriage imposes the exacting task of blending a person's psyche with that of another individual; the choice of a vocation requires the exercise of discrimination; old age demands a change of perspective; sickness poses problems connected with the failing physical vehicle; death presents the alarming perspective of the omnipresent unknown; fear, that exciting phantom of man's teeming brain, casts its morbid shadows in every corner of human affairs. These are the tensions that have become customary in our civilization. Others, even more shattering, are the lot of the person who presses forward in the task of integrating the psyche.

Between the personality, or mask, and the psyche, or animating life, a certain amount of friction exists. This mask is a prism through which the light from within is strangely distorted; the vehicle through which the psyche acts is an inadequate instrument. The

Just as tremendous pressures transform a simple piece of coal into a glowing diamond, so do many applied stresses of life call forth the radiance that sleeps in man.

relation of the moon to the sun is symbolic of this phenomenon. When the mask directly reflects the light of the psyche, the tension reaches a crescendo. Consequently, the life of the person who seeks to reduce the ideal to the dimensions of the real is filled with extraordinary stresses and strains that test the fabric of his convictions and the quality of his aspirations. The crescendo-points involved as he presses forward are sometimes call initiations.

The relationship between the personality and the creative psyche is of the greatest importance. When the two are not aligned, the result may be friction, distress, and ultimate catastrophe. To the degree that the persona splits off from the psyche and becomes a separate entity, a state of inescapable conflict and inner antagonism is apparent. This condition afflicts many persons who are unaware of the causes that underlie their malaise.

On the other hand, when the inner life and the outer expression are in harmony, a new stage of development is reached. It should be understood that there are two types of problems confronting individuals, namely, those resulting from disharmony between psyche and persona, and those arising from the blending of the two. In most cases the cause of difficulty is rooted in disharmony; in a few, and these will receive special consideration in these pages, the subjugation of the persona to the inner will bring with it notable adjustments. This second set of problems is connected with the construction of the rainbow bridge.

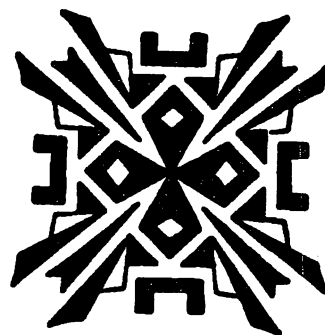
Let us recapitulate. Instinct drives the individual into incarnation. By experience, emotion is aroused and intellect awakened, and the discrimi-

nating mind makes its influence felt. This presents problems associated with freedom, choice, direction, response and disillusion. For a long time the individual can only be taught by experience, eventually, however, he learns to raise it to the level of experiment. The difference is decided. Experience buffets the individual from without; experiment is an inwardly determined endeavor to manipulate experience.

Disillusion plays a significant role at this stage. The persona can grasp at the fragmented ideal; it engenders a mist that distorts the true, the good and the beautiful. Hence, it creates a world of resounding discord and catastrophic confusion. In the myths of Oedipus and Narcissus these distortions of the persona are evident.

The discriminating mind perceives this—and suffers much from the knowledge. The world of the persona, being a travesty of the ordered beauty that characterizes the envisioned ideal of the psyche, causes the intellectually-oriented individual much frustration, discouragement, and disillusion. From this splinter-world of the persona, he then detaches himself, so that he is no longer at the mercy of its buffeting tides. For the aims of the persona, he substitutes the values of the psyche. By so doing, he achieves a higher point of integration. Later, he will realize that society itself is the persona of a nation, and will seek to make the objective distortion change in conformity with the inner vision of the collective psyche.

This escape from the fragmentary vision of the persona involves renunciation. In re-focusing at the level of the psyche, the world of the persona



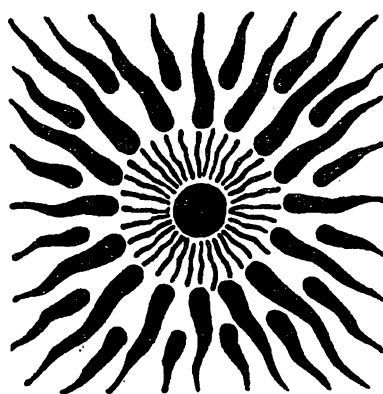
is left behind. This has sometimes been called conversion; it might just as well be designated the decentralization of personality. Emphasis upon the shells that must be discarded causes those who view this process to speak of renunciation; for those who make this transition, however, it involves a release into the fuller life of the psyche.

Psychologists have noted a death-drive in human behavior, and the tendency to suicide lends color to their belief. The would-be suicide has come to the conclusion that something must die, but believes that the physical body must be cast aside; actually, however, it is the value-system of the persona-world that must be shattered.

The drama enacted between the persona and the psyche may be divided into two phases. The first concerns their opposition; the second, the absorption of the persona into the individuality of the psyche. This relationship is reminiscent of that which existed between the twins Castor and Pollux; one must wane, and other wax. So too must the light of the persona be fused with the radiance of the psyche.

As long as the individual identifies himself with the fractional persona, he endeavors to preserve its world and its values. The time comes, however, when its narrow walls are recognized to be the ramparts of a prison. Then he deliberately invokes the psyche, knowing full well that the familiar citadel of the persona will be destroyed to the extent that his call is effective. This invocation of the psyche shatters the form in the interests of the spirit. The muddy paths of the earth are exchanged for the lighted highway of the rainbow bridge.

The infusion of the persona by the psyche concludes one phase of the work that must be done in constructing the rainbow bridge. The persona is now infused by a creative, animating energy. However, psyche herself aspires to a higher union. Plato speaks of beings in whom the masculine and feminine elements are perfectly balanced—androgens. Sex is a persona-expression of this urge for union or balance. For



the psyche, however, it is the finding of the One, that is, the monad. The myth of Psyche searching for Cupid bears upon this point. If the psyche represents the dominance of inclusive compassion and love, the monad symbolizes the Power of Will that we sense in the great creation, but never truly know.

Thus we may say that the earth represents the persona-consciousness; psyche, the rainbow bridge that leads to the abode of light; and the monad, the undeviating Will-to-Good that is at the heart of existence. Geometrically speaking, the persona may be equated with the circumference of a circle; psyche, with the radius that leads inward; the monad with the central point to which all radii lead.

However, it is not possible to approach the monad save by the ministrations of the psyche, that is, by traveling upon the rainbow bridge. The persona=consciousness is incapable of comprehending the monad; thence, the assertion that power is a corrupting influence. This is illustrated by a Greek myth. Jupiter, in the guise of a mortal, wooed Semele. Her nurse filled her mind with doubts about her immortal lover. In short, Semele was persuaded to ask Jupiter to appear before her in all the splendor of his Olympian office. When he complied with her request, the brightness and glory of his presence were more than she could bear; her mortal frame was burned to ashes. Thus, the power of the monad can only be safely known through the consciousness of the psyche.

To be continued in the next issue of *The Eclectic Theosophist*.

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LOYALTY AND LEADERSHIP

Christmas Humphreys

This question involves an examination of the relationship between three allied, yet distinct, concepts. The first of these is the difference between a principle and its application, which is tantamount to that between abstract and concrete; the second involves the doctrine of what we will loosely call self-dependence or self-determination; and the third is expressed in that most abused of terms—loyalty.

ABSTRACT AND CONCRETE

The Theosophy of today is, unfortunately, becoming more and more materialistic, and one of the causes would appear to be this: The Theosophical Society offers to the World a body of general principles, purporting to be fragments of the Eternal Wisdom. Some student of Theosophy applies one of these principles to a particular set of facts, according to his own interpretation thereof. This is as it should be. But this crystallized fragment of a general principle, colored by the individual interpretation of the student, is placidly accepted by those too lazy to think for themselves and by them propagated as being a principle of Theosophy. Hence formulae of conduct and dogmas on every topic, which are to all, save the original student, as dead and meaningless as any other form of dogma. For example, it is a principle of Theosophy that there is but One Life. It follows, says one student upon thinking the matter over, that we must not wear leather boots. This is his application to personal attire of the conception of the Unity of Life. But it is not Theosophy in the sense of being given to the world as a fragment of the Law. Yet there are many who will tell us that "Theosophy lays down that we must not wear leather boots". The principles are there, let each student imbibe them and apply them for himself, but let him at the same time leave others free to do likewise. Let us suggest to one another, by all means, ways in which any given principle may

be applied, but let us avoid dogmatizing, for each must ultimately be his own interpreter of the law. In short, let Theosophy be given to the world upon higher mental or conceptual levels, as a body of ideas or principles, and let the application of them be left adaptable to the needs and special viewpoint of all who seek Truth along any line whatever.

SELF-DETERMINATION

Having raised the discussion to a level of principle, let us proceed.

Now it is submitted that there is only one form of true loyalty, and that is Self-loyalty, or loyalty to the Self. We must therefore first examine the doctrine of self-determination, which, for the purposes of this article, may be cited as the cryptic proposition "I am I," and all that flows therefrom. This amounts to identification with the Ego or Higher Self, which may be considered as the relatively permanent part of one's being as opposed to its temporary vehicles of expression or personality. Among other considerations which logically follow from our first premise, is the refusal to submit to any discipline from whatever source save that imposed by the Self or Ego on the self, the not-Self, the personality. Secondly, and almost as a corollary of the above, the necessity of perfect control of the personality by the Ego. Finally, and for our purposes perhaps most important of all, the inherent right to lay down a line of conduct for oneself, and to follow it unswervingly, so long as it does not infringe an equal right in others.

LOYALTY.

This following of the Self becomes of paramount importance, and all other considerations must give way before it. Such at any rate would appear to be the law of the Great Ones. The Master "M" writing to A.P. Sinnett on the subject of discipleship, lays down in terms that "only those who have proved faithful to themselves and Truth through everything will be allowed further intercourse with us." Is not this

the fundamental quality of "an honorable man," and who for one moment can in its absence be trusted? Truly Polonius spoke for all time when he advised Laertes:

*"This above all, to thine own
self be true, And, it must
follow, as the night and the day.
Thou canst not then be
false to any man.*

But by being untrue to the Self there arises an internal conflict, the Self vainly lying to the Self, and experiencing considerable discomfort from that factor which can never be quite ignored, the memory of past error known as conscience. Every idealist understands the nature of Self-loyalty. Suppose that I try to be loyal to some ideal. Then to whom am I loyal in following that ideal? My Ego, My Self. For it is the Ego that is an idealist, not the personality. Does it not logically follow that by being loyal to the ideal I am but being loyal or true to myself?

Let us now consider the nature of what is called "personal loyalty". This occurs when some person decides to be loyal to some other person, and to "stand by" him or her, come what may. Such personal loyalty should be the effect on an unseen cause, not a cause in itself. It should be the result of the harmonious cooperation of two Egos rather than the blind following of a personality in total disregard of violated principles. Yet even the greatest have been known to allow themselves to be blinded by the personality of another. Let personalities follow personalities if they will, but when I, the Ego, stoop to pledge my loyalty to a mere personality, however great that personality may be, I have, by so doing, ceased to rely entirely upon my Self, and consequently ceased to be true to my Self. By thus placing my reliance on another I have virtually abdicated from the throne of Self, and thereby renounced my owners of spiritual perception, the power to contact Truth.

The Self follows principles, unalterable Laws and only the Self, the not-Self, follows personalities. How then can I be loyal to others and at the same time "to mine own Self be true"? Is not the answer that the finest loyalty to others is unswerving loyalty to one's Self? Examine this, and it will be found to be true. A man who merely follows personalities cannot be relied upon by the Ego whose personality he elects to follow not to be led on a new quest at the critical moment by some "more attractive personality." On the other hand, an independent thinker who follows his own ideals and principles before all else, can always be trusted. For the leader realizes that the follower is working to the same end as he, and that as long as he, the leader, works faithfully towards the ideal he represents in the eyes of his follower, he can rely upon his loyal support. But he knows equally well that if he proves disloyal to the common ideal, as surely will his follower desert him. Thus does the very genuine loyalty of his supporters keep the leader to the lines originally laid down. Blind obedience may be laudable on the battlefield but is of little avail in spiritual evolution.

The one apparent contradiction to this principle proves, upon examination, to be its most perfect illustration. It may be argued: "What of the unswerving devotion of the pupil for his Master? But is this a case of following a personality? Of course not. It is at least as high a relationship as Ego following Ego, and perhaps something higher still. Have not the Masters in *Light on the Path* defined Themselves as "Symbols of the Higher Self"? It follows that in following the Master the pupil is only being true to his own Self. Nor is the metaphysical explanation of this doctrine of loyalty difficult

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to understand. There is but one Self, and how can he who is a fragment of that Self be disloyal to any other fragment shrined in any other personality? Conversely, how can he be loyal to something other than the One Self? Be loyal to the problem of life, and it will automatically solve itself.

TYPES OF LEADERSHIP

There are three types of leadership. Firstly, the devotion of the older brother to the Master, as we have seen, is a type of the Selfship in which the leader is on the form side. Such officials, organizers, executives, and elects are respected to a greater extent as being spiritual leaders. Such a leader is once head of the form, or business side, and of the life side from which the organization draws its strength. Now, it is a business maxim that executive officers are elected to act within certain limits, and as long as they keep within those limits they will be obeyed. Otherwise, there would be no point in electing them. This ensures the smooth running of the organization. Therefore, to the extent that any leader is a business official acting intra vires,

you obey him. But to the extent that he is spiritual leader you, your Ego, are prepared to follow such leader only as long as his path and yours are one. For you, the real You, are primarily pledged to your principles.

Keep the dual capacity of such a leader clear, and the problem of loyalty is solved. And that dual capacity resolves itself in the long run into a question of Ego and personality. On the form side you obey the elected official, for only so is business done; on the life side you follow principles, for only so is the Self, and only people in accordance with those principles, are disciplined.



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MUSINGS OF THE TRUE THEOSOPHIST'S PATH

W. Q. Judge

I.

"The way of inward peace is in all things to conform to the pleasure and disposition of the Divine Will. Such as would have all things succeed and come to pass according to their own fancy, and not come to know this way; and therefore lead a harsh and bitter life; always restless and out of humor, without treading the way of peace."

Know then, oh, Man, that he who seeks the hidden way, can only find it through the door of life. In the hearts of all, at some time, there arises the desire for knowledge. He who thinks his desire will be fulfilled, as the little bird in the nest, who has only to open his mouth to be fed, will very truly be disappointed.

In all nature we can find no instance where effort of some kind is not required. We find there is a natural result from such effort. He who would live the life or find wisdom can only do so by continued effort. If one becomes a student, and learns to look partially within the veil, or has found within his own being something that is greater than his outer self, it gives no authority for one to sit down in idleness or fence himself in from contact with the world. Because one sees the gleam of the light ahead he cannot say to his fellow "I am holier than thou: or draw the mantle of seclusion around himself.

The soul develops like the flower, in God's sunlight, and unconsciously to the soil in which it grows. Shut out the light and the soil grows damp and sterile, the flower withers or grows pale and sickly. Each and every one is here for a good and wise reason.

If we find partially the why we are here, then is there the more reason that we should by intelligent contact with life, seek in it the future elucidation of the problem. It is not the study of ourselves so much, as the thought for others that opens this door. The events of life and their causes lead to knowledge. They must be studied when they are manifested in daily life.

There is no idleness for the Mystic. He finds his daily life among the roughest and hardest of the labors and trials of the world perhaps, but goes his way with smiling face and joyful heart, nor grows too sensitive for association with his fellows, nor so extremely spiritual as to forget that some other body is perhaps hungering for food.

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Giving thought to self will most truly prevent and overthrow your aims and objects, particularly when directed toward the occult.

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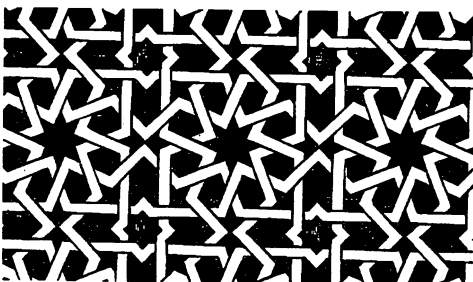
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II.

"Work as those who are ambitious,—Respect life as those do who desire it.—Be happy as those who live for happiness." *Light on the Path.*

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to understand. There is but one Self, and how can he who is loyal to the fragment of that Self within him be disloyal to any other fragment enshrined in any other human being? Conversely, how can a man by being loyal to something which is not-Self, such as a personality, remain true to the One Self? Be loyal to the Self, and the problem of loyalty to others is automatically solved.

TYPES OF LEADERSHIP

There are three main types of Leadership. Firstly, spiritual leadership, or the devotion of the younger for the older brother in evolution. This, as we have seen, is but a faithful following of the Self within. Secondly, leadership in what may be called the form side. Such leaders are simply business officials, cogs in the machinery of an organization. These two types are the two extremes. But in between them comes a third. Most collections of people, combining to form a new unit, elect certain of their members to hold a dual position. Such persons hold office on the form side, and at the same time are respected to a greater or less degree as being spiritual leaders. Such are at once head of the form, or business side, and of the life side from which the organization draws its strength. Now, it is a business maxim that executive officers are elected to act within certain limits, and as long as they keep within those limits they will be obeyed. Otherwise, there would be no point in electing them. This ensures the smooth running of the organization. Therefore, to the extent that any leader is a business official acting *intra vires*,

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Keep the dual capacity of such a leader clear, and the problem of loyalty is solved. And that dual capacity resolves itself in the long run into a question of Ego and personality. On the form side you obey the elected official, for only so is business done; but on the life side you follow principles, your Self, and only people in so far as they embody those principles. This distinction leads to a disciplined and smoothly running organization composed of free and independent units—surely the Ideal. For the more independent those units are the more faithfully will they follow both aspects of their leaders. Working only for the good of the whole, they obey on the form side their officials, *qua* officials, while on the life side retaining their independence.

These principles seem to be clear and unanswerable, but their application is by no means easy. The line of Self-loyalty is seldom, if ever, the line of least resistance. But, though it be a hard road to travel, there are those who prefer its rigors to the "pricks within" from an ever watchful conscience. For, in following the harder road, you have only the world with which to reckon, but on deviating from it you will find yourself in conflict with the Self. Choose, then, for sooner or later the choice must be made. Self loyalty is something far grater than mere "ultimate expediency." It is the fundamental principle of conduct, and the road it lays down is the only Right Road in evolution, and one that, come what may, must ultimately be trodden by every evolving soul. Has it not been said:

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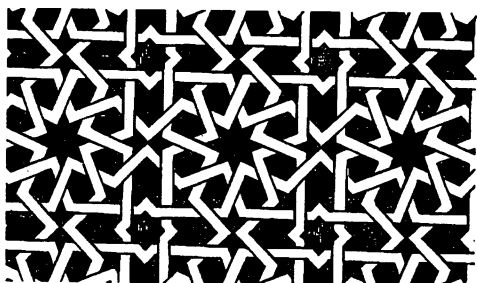
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We are tried in wondrous ways, and in the seemingly unimportant affairs of life, there often lie the most dangerous of the temptations.

Labor at best, is frequently disagreeable owing either to mental or physical repugnance. When he who seeks the upward path, begins to find it, labor grows more burdensome, while at the time, he is, owing to his physical condition, not so well fitted to struggle with it. This is all true, but there must be no giving in to it. It must be forgotten. He must work, and if he cannot have the work he desires or deems best suited to him, then must he take and perform that which presents itself. It is that which he most needs. It is not intended either, that he do it to have it done. It is intended that he work as if it was the object of his life, as if his whole heart was in it. Perhaps he may be wise enough to know that there is something else, or that the future holds better gifts for him; still this also must to all intents be forgotten, while he takes up his labor, as if there were no tomorrow.

Remember that life is the outcome of the Ever-Living. If you have come to comprehend a little of the mystery of life, and can value its attractions according to their worth; these are no reasons why you should walk forth with solemn countenance to blight the enjoyments of other men. Life to them is as real, as the mystery is to you. Their time will come as yours has, so hasten it for them, if you can, by making life brighter, more joyous, better.

If it be your time to fast, put on the best raiment you have, and go forth, not as one who fasts, but as one who lives for life.

Do your sighing and crying within you. If you cannot receive the small events of life and their meanings without crying them out to all the world, think you that you are fitted to be trusted with the mysteries?

The doing away with one or certain articles of diet, in itself, will not open the sealed portals. If this contained the key, what wise beings must the beasts of the fields be, and what a profound

Mystic must Nebuchadrezzar have been, after he was "turned out to grass:"!

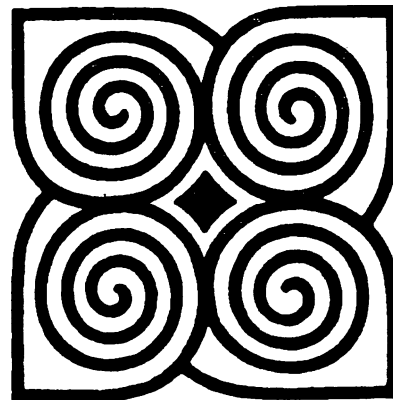
There are some adherents of a faith, which has arisen in the land, who deem it wise to cast away all things that are distasteful to them; to cut asunder the ties of marriage because they deem it will interfere with their spiritual development, or because the other pilgrim is not progressed enough. Brother, there lives not the man who is wise enough to sit as a judge on the spiritual development of any living being. He is not only unwise but blasphemous who says to another, "Depart! you impede my exalted spiritual development."

The greatest of all truths lies frequently in plain sight, or veiled in contraries. The impression has gone abroad that the Adept or the Mystic of high degree has only attained his station by forsaking the association of his fellow creatures or refusing the marriage tie. It is the belief of very wise Teachers that all men who had risen to the highest degrees of Imitation, have at some time passed through the married state. Many men, failing in the trials, have ascribed their failure to being wedded, precisely as that other coward, Adam, after being the first transgressor cried out, "It was Eve."

One of the exalted of the Divine Mysteries lies hidden here — therefore, oh Man, it is wise to cherish that which holds so much of God and seek to know its meaning; not by dissolution and cutting asunder, but by binding and strengthening the ties. Our most Ancient Masters knew of this and Paul also speaks of it. (*Ephesians v, 32.*)

Be patient, kindly and wise, for perhaps in the next moment of life, the light will shine out upon thy compan-

*Do you not think, Oh Man,
that it is the height of arrogance
for you to sit in judgment upon
any other created thing, while
you, a beggar, are going about
in a borrowed robe?*



ion, and you discover that you are but a blind man, claiming to see. Remember this, that you own not one thing in this world. Your wife is but a gift; your children are but loaned to you. All else you possess is given to you only while you use it wisely. Your body is not yours, for Nature claims it as her property. Do you not think, Oh Man, that it is the height of arrogance for you to sit in judgment upon any other created thing, while you, a beggar, are going about in a borrowed robe?

If misery, want and sorrow are thy portion for a time, be happy that it is not death. If it is death, be happy here is no more of life.

You would have wealth, and tell of the good you would do with it. Truly will you lose your way under these conditions. It is quite probable, that you are as rich as you ever will be, therefore, desire to do good with what you have — and *do it*. If you have nothing, know that it is best and wisest for you. Just as surely as you murmur and complain just so surely will you find that "from him that hath not, shall be taken even that which he hath." This sounds contradictory, but in reality is in most harmonious agreement. Work in life and the Occult are similar; all is the result of your own effort and will. You are not rash enough to believe that you will be lifted up into Heaven like the Prophet of old—but you really hope some one will come along and give you a good shove toward it.

Know then, Disciples, that you only can lift yourselves by your own efforts. When this is done, you may have the knowledge that you will find many to

accompany you on your heretofore lonely journey; but neither they nor your Teacher will be permitted to push or pull you one step onward.

This is all a very essential part of your preparation and trial for Initiation.

You look and wait for some great and astounding occurrence, to show you that you are going to be permitted to enter behind the veil; that you are to be Initiated. It will never come. He only who studies all things and learns from them, as he finds them, will be permitted to enter, and for him there are no flashing lightnings or rolling thunder. He who enters the door, does so as gently and imperceptibly as the tide rises in the night time. Live well your life. Seek to realize the meaning of every event. Strive to find the Ever Living and wait for more light. The True Initiated does not fully realize what he is passing through, until his degree is received. If you are striving for light and Initiation, remember this, that your cares will increase, your trial thicken, your family make new demands upon you. He who can understand and pass through these patiently, wisely, placidly—may hope.

III.

If you desire to labor for the good of the world, it will be unwise for you to strive to include it all at once in your efforts. If you can help elevate or teach but one soul—that is a good beginning, and more than is given to many.

Fear nothing that is in Nature and visible. Dread no influence exerted by sect, faith, or society. Each and every one of them originated upon the same basis—Truth, or a portion of it at least. You may not assume that you have a greater share than they, it being needful only that you find all the truth each one possesses. You are at war

Do you know, Oh man, what the powers of the Mystic are? Do you know that for each gift of this kind he gives a part of himself.

with none. It is peace you are seeking, therefore it is best that the good in everything is found. For this brings peace.

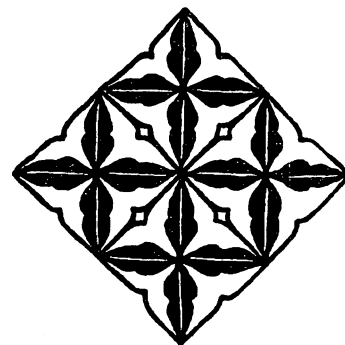
It has been written that he who lives the Life shall know the doctrine. Few there be who realize the significance of The Life.

It is not by intellectually philosophizing upon it, until reason ceases to solve the problem, nor by listening in ecstatic delight to the ravings of an *Elemental clothed*—whose hallucinations are but the offspring of the Astral—that the life is realized. Nor will it be realized by the accounts of the experiences of other students. For there be some who will not realize Divine Truth itself, when written, unless it be properly punctuated or expressed in flowery, flowing words.

Remember this, that as you live your life each day with an uplifted purpose and unselfish desire, each and every event will bear for you a deep significance—an occult meaning—and as you learn their import, so do you fit yourself for higher work.

There are no rose gardens upon the way in which to loiter about, nor fawning slaves to ban one with golden rods of ostrich plumes. The Ineffable Light will not stream out upon you every time you may think you have turned up the wick, nor will you find yourself sailing about in an astral body, to the delight of yourself and the astonishment of the rest of the world, simply because you are making the effort to find wisdom.

He who is bound in any way—he who is narrow in his thoughts—finds it doubly difficult to pass onward. You may equally as well gain wisdom and light in a church as by sitting upon a post while your nails grow through your hands. It is not going to extremes

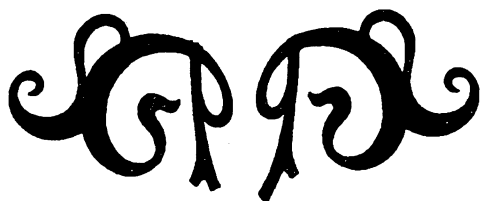


or growing fanatical in any direction that the life will be realized.

Be temperate in all things, most of all in the condemnation of other men. It is unwise to be intemperate or drunken with wine. It is equally unwise to be drunken with temperance. Men would gain the powers; or the way of working wonders. Do you know, Oh man, what the powers of the Mystic are? Do you know that for each gift of this kind he gives a part of himself. That is only with mental anguish, earthly sorrow, and almost his heart's blood, these gifts are gained. Is it true, think you, my brother, that he who truly possesses them desires to sell them at a dollar a peep, or any other price? He who would trade upon these things finds himself farther from his goal than when he was born.

There are gifts and powers. Not just such as you have created in your imagination, perhaps. Harken, to one of these powers. He who has passed onward to a certain point, finds that the hearts of men lie spread before him as an open book, and from there onward the motives of men are clear. In other words, he can read the hearts of men. But not selfishly; should he but once use this knowledge selfishly, the book

Is it true, think you, my brother, that he who truly possesses them desires to sell them at a dollar a peep, or any other price? He who would trade upon these things finds himself farther from his goal than when he was born.



is closed—and he reads no more. Think you, my brothers, he would permit himself to *sell* a page out of this book?

Time—that which does not exist outside the inner circle of this little world—seems of vast importance to the physical man. There comes to him at times, the thought that he is not making any progress, and that he is receiving nothing from some Mystic source. From the fact that he has the thought that no progress is being made the evidence is gained that he is working onward. Only the dead in living bodies need fear. That which men would receive from Mystic sources is frequently often repeated, and in such a

quiet, unobtrusive voice, that he who is waiting to hear it shouted in his ear, is apt to pass on unheeding.

Urge no man to see as yourself, as it is quite possible you may see differently when you awake in the morning. It is wiser to let the matter rest without argument. No man is absolutely convinced by that. It is but blowing your breath against the whirlwind.

It was at one time written over the door: "Abandon Hope, all ye who enter here." It has taken hundreds of years for a few to come to the realization that the wise men had not the slightest desire for the company of a lot of

hopeless incurables in the mysteries. There is to be abandoned hope for the gratification of our possessions, our curiosities, our ambition or desire for gain. There is also another Hope—the true; and he is a wise man who comes to the knowledge of it. Sister to Patience, they together are the Godmothers of Right Living, and two of the Ten who assist the Teacher.

The Path, Vol. I, August, 1886, pp. 155-56; October, 1886, pp. 208-11; February, 1887, pp. 339-41



THE NATURE OF BUDDHIST MEDITATION

Lama Doboom Tulku

In Buddhism it is said that for people to live healthy and effective lives it is both useful and important for them to cultivate a daily practice of meditation. By benefiting their own minds in this way, making themselves more calm, controlled and self-aware, they become both happier individuals and better members of society. In Tibetan we have the terms *rangdon* and *shendon*(1) which translates respectively as 'the purpose of oneself' and 'the purpose of others.' To be of benefit to the world, we have to first put ourselves in order. In the Mahayana, the motivation is to benefit ourselves in

order to be of greater benefit to the world. Meditation is cultivated on this basis.

The Tibetan term for meditation is *gom*(2). Gom literally means to familiarize the mind with a concept, aspect of being, or theme. In this context it means to familiarize our mind with a spiritually significant subject, or to integrate the essence of that theme into our stream of consciousness.

It is important to understand something about the types of meditation practiced in Buddhism. The most general categorization of these is into a twofold scheme: analytical meditation; and concentrated medication.

Analytical meditation is that part of the process of seeking a spiritual path wherein one investigates the relevant aspects of the object (of meditation) by means of reasoning. This helps one to gain strong conviction and a deeper understand.

For example, in order to gain realization of the ultimate nature of the mind, it is necessary for us first to understand the mode of its existence. This is not possible without applying some kind of technique, and the success in the application of a technique must be preceded by our having examined well the dynamics of that method.

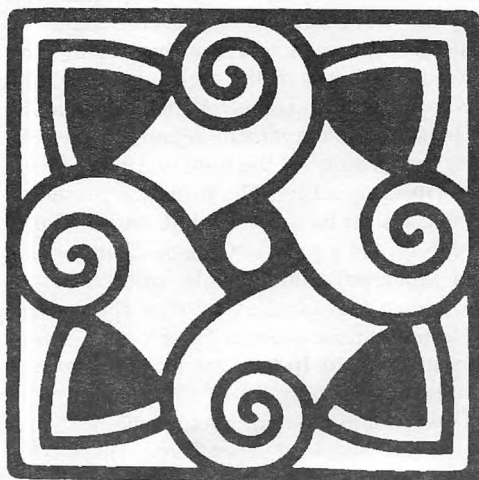
In general, any kind of mental investigation based on an intention of

seeking a spiritual goal can be called analytical meditation.

Concentrated medication is the phase of mental application wherein our mind is able to remain focused on a chosen object for a prolonged period of time. That is to say, concentrated meditation occurs when we understand a technique to the extent that we are able to place the mind on a given subject with some degree of stability. Normally, analytical mediation proceeds the concentrated application.

Within concentrated medication there is a special method for achieving one-pointedness of mind. This method is called *zhiney*(3) in Tibetan, and *shamatha* in Sanskrit. The form and

The difference between single-pointed meditation and special insight is that the former principally has the function of pacifying our mind, and thus enabling us to concentrate more deeply on a given subject. Special insight, on the other hand, has the ability to analyze and penetrate into the subtle nature of an object.



method as well as the goal of *zhiney* is more or less the same in both the Hindu and Buddhist traditions. That is to say, it is considered to be a common practice of meditation for both. *Zhiney* is said to be the foundation of all the meditational qualities required for traversing the spiritual paths.

Apart from *zhiney*, most other Buddhist meditations differ from their Hindu counterparts. These differences are often explained in terms of the perspective of the mediator, and also the objects meditated upon.

In general it is said that Buddhist meditation must be motivated by disinterest with samsaric existence, and by compassionate thoughts towards all sentient beings. Another characteristic of Buddhist meditation is that all the various techniques must be pervaded by the concept of selflessness, or *anatma*.

As mentioned earlier, meditation can be of different types. In particular I would like to discuss the type called *zhiney*, or single-pointed meditation.

The practice of *zhiney* is very important to and useful for us, because it is the principal method for calming and stabilizing the mind. Without it our meditations will not lead to higher realization.

When we have achieved a single-pointed mind our thoughts become clear, calm and stable. In that state we can reason effectively, penetrating deeply into any object of meditation and thus attaining pure realization of its true nature. This penetrative mind is called *lhagtong* (4) in Tibetan, from the Sanskrit term *vipashyana*, which means 'special insight.'

The difference between single-pointed meditation and special insight is that the former principally has the function of pacifying our mind, and thus enabling us to concentrate more deeply on a given subject. Special insight, on the other hand, has the ability to analyze and penetrate into the subtle nature of an object.

Thus if we sincerely seek the realization of truth we should first develop clarity and strength of mind by

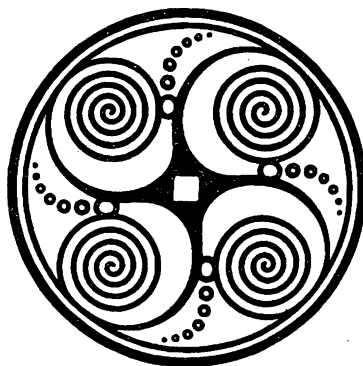
means of the *zhiney* training, and then turn this force toward the cultivation of special insight.

Kamalashita, (5) a ninth-century Indian saint-scholar, uses the analogy of a lamp to explain how wisdom arises from a single-pointed mind. When a candle is put in a place where there is no wind, it can clearly illuminate everything around it. Similarly, when our mind becomes clear and still, and is free from agitation and dullness, we are able to develop clear and deep insight into the higher nature of the objects upon which we are meditating.

Among the many objects taken as the focus of meditation for developing single-pointedness, concentrating on our breath as an antidote to discursive thought is very popular and common. Another popular object of concentration in this method is the mind itself.

By developing concentration one passes through nine stages. These nine stages are mentioned according to the gradual development of stability of the mind. I will just list the names of the nine, as this conveys something of a sense of their nature:

- (1) inwardly placing the mind on the object;
- (2) extending the duration of the concentration;
- (3) replacing the mind on the object when it is distracted;
- (4) continuously restoring the focus of the mind
- (5) achieving a state of inner control;
- (6) achieving a state of inner pacification;
- (7) achieving a state of complete inner pacification;
- (8) achieving single-pointed mind; and
- (9) achieving mental equilibrium.



As said earlier, meditation has the effect of pacifying the mind. For ascetics and ordinary people alike, peace of mind is essential. If you have a peaceful and clear mind, this will enable you to be more effective in any activity that you undertake, be it temporal or spiritual.

Certain meditations of the tantric path involve visualizing oneself as a particular deity. These generally are to be performed only by initiates; but sometimes they can be performed by non-initiates as a method of cultivating concentration.

The practice of meditation has many beneficial effects, from relieving us of stress, to improving our physical and mental health, and making us into more happy and effective human beings. In the end, though, its ultimate goal is to lead us to the states of higher being, nirvana and enlightenment. When we practice it well, all of these beneficial effects become ours.



FOOTNOTES

1. Tib., Rang-don and gZhan-don.
2. Tib., sGom. The term is lined to the word to familiarize, in the sense of to integrate.
3. Tib., Zhi-gnas, which literally means abiding in peace, or peaceful repose. The sense of the term is that the mind rests on the subject of meditation without the disturbances of being distracted by the two obstacles of torpor and agitation, or mental wandering.
4. Tib., Lhag-mthong, which literally means 'special seeing.' The term is related to the cultivation of wisdom, or sherab (Tib., Shes-rab; Skt., prajna).
5. Kamalashila played a very important role in the development of Tibetan religious history. It was he who was invited to Tibet toward the end of the eighth century, and who met with and defeated the Chinese monk Huashang Mahayana in debate, an encounter that would set the tone of Tibet's future spiritual direction. The former represented the classical Indian tradition, and the latter represented a form of Chinese chan (or zen, in Japanese). Kamalashila, one of India's foremost logicians, easily won the contest. From that time onward Tibet looked almost exclusively to Indian for its spiritual and cultural direction.

This simile is taken from Kamalashila's *Stages of Meditation* (Skt., *Bhavanakrama*; Tib., *bsGom-rim*; Toh. 3916).

THE PHILOSOPHY OF SUFISM

K. M. P. Mohamed Cassim, Ph. D.

Many people accept as inevitable the changes which come in the course of material progress, but are reluctant to accept changes that affect them personally, which upset their established way of life, their manner of thinking and conceptions of things. Few realize that the key to successful living lies in the ability to adopt to changing situations. They physical world is considered as real, but only the physical senses perceive it as such. The aim of Sufism is to bring about certain changes in man's consciousness wherein he transcends the limitation of physical existence. When our state of consciousness rises to the stage where our awareness of ourselves as oneness with essence of reality (Dhat) is realized, then only will it enable us to claim the attainment of spiritual liberation. According to Suffism we can never perceive the Truth (Hagg) with a conditioned mind. We cannot attain liberation until our ego (Nafs) is dissolved. Sufism holds the view that the way to go beyond the conditioned mind is only through self-knowledge which means by extensive awareness and stillness of the mind which will ultimately dissolve all delusions.

All human beings are in search of happiness in some form or other. Our question for happiness continues unabated, though its entire attraction keeps on shifting from time to time. The craving is never satisfied because ego is the personification of our desire and a conglomeration of sense experiences which take the form of pleasant or unpleasant physiological memory. Man's outlook must change with the acceptance of spiritual values as a guide to behavior. Sense-experiences affect our mental process in a subtle way causing feelings of attraction and repulsion. Justification or condemnation creates a short of whirlpool of duality in which our life is caught up. Sense-experiences get crystallized psychological memory which projects

The outer world is nothing but a reflection of one's attitude; if the very structure of one's individual life is not free from confusion one cannot establish a harmonious relationship outwardly.

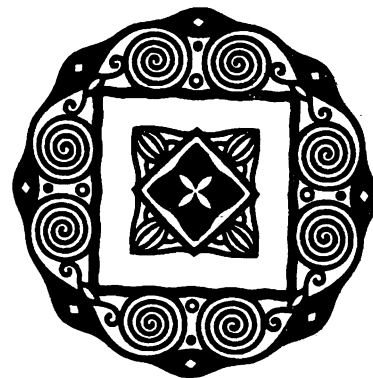
the past into the present and tarnishes it with numerous preconceived notions and prejudices. False ego makes us view the present through the screen of the past and it also projects into the future in the form of hopes and fears which of their very nature are illusory in character. This assertion of psychological memory with its ego complex is the conditioned mind.

The main point in Sufism is as to how one should live in detachment. Mind alone is the cause of the bondage and freedom of the soul. By the attachment of the mind to the world we become bound. Give up all ideas of me and mine for thus alone is the heart purified and so freed from lust, greed and elusion. Detachment will help the unfoldment of devotion and devotion will help confirmation in detachment. When detachment and dispassion are practiced rightly one can rest assured that the discharge of duties in the world only be helpful to spiritual progress. If one dons the garb of a mon, goes out in the forest, but carries in his mind attachment for things, he will see no better things in the forest than the world. He will create a worldly environment in the forest. If one lives in the world, wears the habit of common people of the world, does the usual round of duties of life yet it is possible to be detached from all things.

The real practical value of Sufism is that it gives meaning to life and purpose to physical existence. It replaces confusion with knowledge and doubt and despair with confidence and hope. It bestows mental serenity upon those who actually practice it and makes possible the realization of Reality. Sufism offers man not only a philoso-

phy, but a code of conduct and a way of life which can be used as a foundation upon which to build spiritual freedom. When the basic cardinal principles are fully understood and assimilated it changes the aspects of life so completely enabling one to enjoy perfect Peace and the capacity to distinguish between Reality and illusion. The great task is to discover Reality on the basis of one's own inner experience. Further, it is in the process of one's life only that the discovery of Divinity must be made as otherwise there can be no realization.

Sufism points out that every religion is a unique contribution to the spiritual life of humanity. It is very essential that a seeker must respect and admire the mystical approach of various religions by honestly accepting the different forms of expression so that one will be able to appreciate the underlying harmony of all religions. After all, religious harmony is not based on sameness, but on cooperation and mutual understanding. If one is burdened with wrong theories and dogmas, one cannot perceive the Truth and hence one must dissolve all prejudices which twist and cloud one's mental vision so that one could approach many problems without any particular form of conditioning. It is to be realized that nothing impedes man's healthy inner growth like fear and suspicion. Without detachment we can never get rid of fear. We are always afraid of losing the things to which we are attached. The root of all these harmful weaknesses is attachment. Sufism says that through the practice of detachment alone can we regain the true awareness of Fana. Sufism gives



the technique so as to get the best out of life without being enslaved and degraded. Sufism teaches how to live in the world in a way which does not hurt the people and at the same time makes spiritual progress possible. It is absolutely true that all our sufferings and bondages of life have their source in our attachment. Our work for society cannot really do good to others unless it is unselfish, couched in detachment.

The outer world is nothing but a reflection of one's attitude; if the very structure of one's individual life is not free from confusion one cannot establish a harmonious relationship outwardly. Therefore, until and unless one develops a high degree of mental detachment by rigorous discipline and restless effort one will not be able to progress in releasing self from imprisonment of illusion. A small mistake committed in a weak moment is enough to wreck what one has spiritually accomplished with diligence and perseverance. The most stupendous task is to observe everything in its purity which means to see all without attachment, without identification and distortion. Self-realization or to know Reality is to understand one's self, the spiritual depth of one's being. Man need only transcend his suffocating ego to discover his true being in the Divine. Those who have been success-

ful in the discovery of this divine in the Beyond are untouched by the vicissitudes of life and become absolutely free of all conditioning; they are at peace with themselves and with the world around them. They become a source of joy, inspiration and peace.

As the human intellect develops, man's powers of comprehension increase and in this connection the study of Sufism assists each one to discover Divinity. Man's first move towards attaining the state of Supreme consciousness is to dispose of his material outlook and to seek the spiritual Truth. The pursuit of Truth is purely and inward pilgrimage and one must finally come to realism that to attain inner tranquility one must be alert and sensitive not to waste mental energy through any kind of conflicts and tensions. In other words, while one is observing various psychological reactions, one must be in a state of non-identification. A real seeker or Murid is not one who knows all, but he who has come to realism that the utility of

knowledge is the ability to live Peacefully and happily in the day-to-day affairs. Man seeks happiness in the external world, whereas Divinity lies within himself. It has to be intuitively experienced inwardly. We cannot think of Reality and find it.

The philosophy of Sufism extols meditation (Muraqabah) as a way of Self-realization. The blissful state of meditation can be experienced only when the entire thought process is erased and transcended; then only is it possible for one to contact that which gives spiritual perfection. In Fana the mind is fully aware and completely negative. It sees things that are without accepting or rejecting, which means, our mental functions of justification and condemnation cease to be in this state and our mind becomes alert, extra active and yet empty. In Fana our mind is stripped of everything including the false self and then it is liberated and is in communion with the absolute Reality. Actually, in Fana we go on eliminating image after image till we reach a point beyond which there is no going. The Sufis have revealed the essence of life as the Truth and the Truth remains constant. Only one's perception of it varies according to one's capacity to comprehend. It is to be realized that Truth stands alone and when it is known one is spiritually free.



DALAI LAMA

Man and society are interdependent, hence the quality of man's behavior as an individual and as participant of his society is inseparable. Reparations have been attempted in the past as contributions to lessening the malaise and dysfunctional attitudes of our social world in order to build a world which is more than equal. Institutions and organizations have been established with their charter of noble ideology to combat these social problems. For all intents and purposes, the objectives have been laudable, but it has been unfortunate that basically good ideas

have been defeated by man's inherent self-interest.

Today, ethics and moral principles sadly fall in the shadow of self-interest particularly in the field of political culture. There is a school of thought which warns the moralists to refrain from politics as politics is devoid of ethics and moral ethics does not further the benefits to man and his society, and life without morality will make man no better than beasts. The political concept is not "dirty," a common jargon associated with politics today, but the instruments of our political culture have tampered with and distorted the fundamental con-

cepts of fine ideals to further their own selfish ends. Today, spiritual people are voicing their concern about the intermingling of politics with religion since they fear the dilution of ethics by politics and, according to them, thereby contaminating the purity of religion. This line of thought is both selfish and contradictory. All religions exist to serve and help man, and any divorce from politics is to forsake a powerful instrument for social welfare. Religion and politics are a useful combination for the welfare of man when tempered by correct ethical concepts with a minimum of self-interest.

SHANTARAKSHITA

*The deputy of the Buddha,
the holy Shantarakshita,*

*And the superior master of incantations, the
ascetic Padmansambhava,*

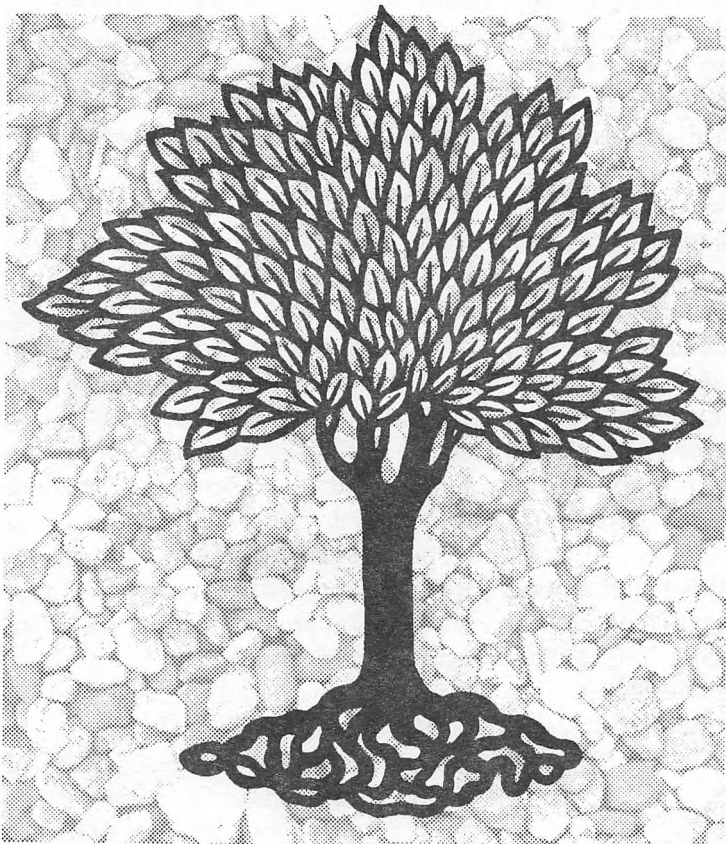
*Kamalashila, the crest jewel of the wise,
And Trhison Detsen, of surpassing thoughts -*

*Through these four, like sunrise in
the dark land of Tibet,*

The light of holy religion spread to the frontiers.

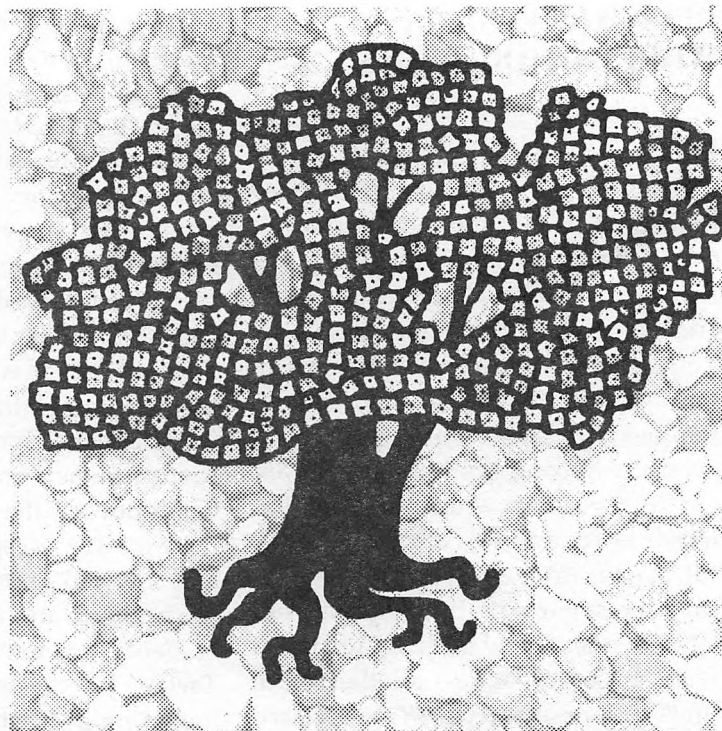
These holy men of unwavering kindness

Tibetans will all forevermore revere.



*I am the same towards all beings. None is
despicable and none is desirable to Me.
But those who worship Me with devotion
are in Me, and so am I in them.*

Bhagavad Gita, X.29 SHRI KRISHNA



THE PURE LAND: A BUDDHIST TALE

In China and Japan many millions of Buddhists have been — and in Japan still are — devotees of the Pure Land doctrine. According to this a Bodhisattva made a great vow which in time fulfilled itself as the manifestation of the Buddha Amitabha (infinite light), who created a Pure Land paradise in the West for those who would take his name with faith. From this Pure Land it was easy to attain final Nirvana.

An old lady of this faith was walking along the road, when she met a Zen master who said to her, "On your way to the Pure Land, eh, old one?"

She nodded.

"Holy Amitabha's there, waiting for you, I expect?"

She shook her head.

"Not thee? The Buddha's not in his Pure Land? Where is he then?"

She tapped twice over her heart and went on her way.

The Zen Master opened his eyes wide in appreciation and said, "you are a real Pure Lander."



REINCARNATION, A WORLD-WIDE BELIEF

Steele O'Hara

However strange the teaching, or unfamiliar the word itself to those reared in the tenets of orthodox Christendom, belief in the doctrine of Reincarnation is a world wide belief, and has been so from remote antiquity. Yet, so long obscured has it been in the Occident that those who are unfamiliar with Theosophy or have made no study of comparative religions are apt to regard it, when first encountered, as something curious, whimsical, even bizarre, with an archaeological interest perhaps, but assuredly not a living one. "How odd!" "But I don't wish to come back to another earth life!" "It cannot be true—I never heard of it before!" Unanswerable as arguments every one — and the lid that stood just a chance of being pried open to stay, shuts down the mind again with the old historic snap.

In spite of this, the teaching is now generally known, and a sincere interest in it is becoming increasing apparent. A few brave clergymen come out boldly in favor of Reincarnation as the only hypothesis worthy of consideration in the ancient case of Justice versus the damaging facts of life. While our liberal pulpits are advancing many teachings closely linked to it—teachings that a generation or two ago, when Spurgeon and others were dangling over the brimstone pit the trembling unelect, would have been anathema: man's essential Divinity, the mystic Christ, the Over-soul, Universal Brotherhood, Karma, and so on.

The following citation is of especial interest in this connection, coming as it does from a clergyman's pen. Says the Reverend William R. Alger, in his *Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life*:

No other doctrine has exerted so extensive, controlling and permanent an influence on mankind as that of the metem-psychosis (i.e., Reincarnation, as the context shows)—the notion that when the soul leaves the body it is born

anew in another body; its rank, character, circumstance and experience in each successive existence depending on the qualities, deeds, and attainments in its *preceding lives*.

"Such a theory, well matured, bore unresisting sway through the great Eastern World long before Moses slept in his little ark of bulrushes on the shore of the Egyptian river. Alexander the Great gazed with astonishment on the self-immolation by fire to which it inspires the Gymnosophists; Caesar found its tenets propagated among the Gauls beyond the Rubicon; and at this hour it reigns despotic, as the learned and traveled Professor at Oxford tells us, without any sign of decrepitude or decay, over the Burman, Chinese Tartar, Tibetan, and Indian nations, including at least 65,000,000 of mankind.

There is abundant evidence to prove that this scheme of thought prevailed at a very early period among the Egyptians, all classes and sects of Hindus, the Persian disciples of the Magi, and the Druids; and, in a later age among the Greeks and Romans as represented by Musaeus, Pythagoras, Plato, Plotinus, Macrobius, Ovid, and many others. It was generally adopted by the Jews at the time of the Babylonian captivity. Traces of it have been discovered among the ancient Scythians, the African tribes, some of the Pacific Islanders, and various aboriginal nations both of North and South America."

The existence of this belief among so called 'savage' peoples is of especial interest, for these, according to Theosophy, are with a few exceptions the remnants of once mighty nations, and

this mystic tenet of their faith is a down-gleam of the now dying Torch of Truth which burned so brightly in its prime. An instance of this traditional belief was related by Mr. Wesley Bradfield of the American Institute of Archaeology of Santa Fe, some years ago while in charge of excavations at Otowi, New Mexico. He describes the excavation of a huge jar, containing the skeleton of a babe, from beneath the hearth of the ruins of an ancient house. There was no explaining the find—the house had been unearthed at quite a depth and its age and history were unknown—until an Indian woman of the vicinity told Mr. Bradfield of a belief that had always been cherished in her tribe, to the effect that a babe taken by death would surely return, and that if the mother would keep the little soul from losing its way on the journey back to rebirth, she must bury the little body beneath the hearth of the ancestral home. This done, the child would return to the same mother.

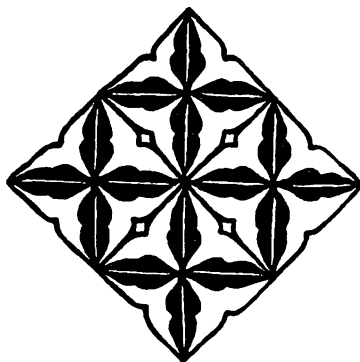
On the other side of the world we find the same beautiful belief among people just beginning to emerge from their primitive status—the Ibibios of Nigeria, for example, who have a high regard for honor and mortality. One of the cardinal tenets in their religion is a belief in Reincarnation. Especially do they believe that those who die as children will be reborn later in the same family if right conditions are maintained. Trees, plants, stones and certain pools and streams are sacred to them because of their belief that within them are the spirits of the dead, waiting to be reborn.*

[*Woman's Mysteries of a Primitive People, by Mrs. D. Amaury-Talbot.]

A few years ago Professor Baldwin Spencer was commissioned by the government of Australia to make special investigation in the Northern Territory among the aboriginal tribes. He reported, among other things:

"Amongst all the tribes examined by the expedition the belief in the reincarnation of the dead is *universal*."

There is the familiar legend that Hiawatha, the Teacher or Messiah of

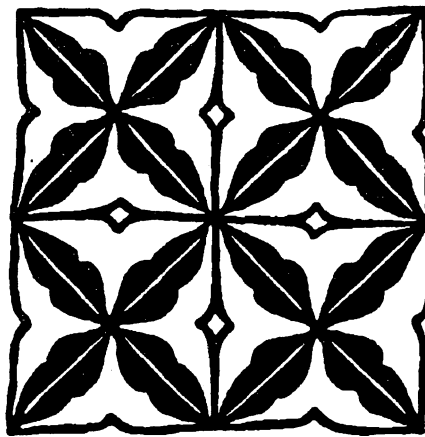


certain Red Indian tribes in prehistoric days, is to reincarnate among his people and teach them again, at a future and more propitious time. It was belief in the same universal doctrine that led the trusting Aztecs to welcome Cortez as at least the forerunner of 'the Fair God', who was described in their books as a prophet destined to return.

The islands of the South Seas teem with legends touching upon the rebirth and return of great teachers, heroes, or helpers. From Hawaii we have the peculiarly significant one of the woman-teacher Pélé, who disheartened by the wrangling and unfaithfulness of those whom she had left in charge of the sacred Lihua fires when she departed on an errand of mercy to a distant land, left them to their fate. But legend has it, at a later period she reincarnated and returned to teach them again.

Hertha of the white bulls, King Arthur, Frederick Barbarossa — how many legends of ancient medieval days are pillared by the same belief! So that one who knows something of the Theosophic Law of Cycles and has studied the cyclic progress of races and nations from infancy and youth through maturity and then on to decline and decay, can readily see why this belief, persisting as it does in folklore and in legend dating from an immemorial past, must have been widespread throughout a long antiquity of culture. And so it was, says Theosophy, not only throughout historic time but in those prehistoric days of spiritual enlightenment of which archaeology is today affording us such glimpses and confirmation.

Those who believe in Reincarnation today, therefore, rank with the distinguished majority—not merely with average humanity, but with the greatest, the noblest, the most scholarly minds of all time; the world's philosophers, her religious and moral reformers, her really great scientists, her loftiest writers, her poets, her sages, her mystics, teachers and devotees. Indeed, to give the names of the men and women of the far past who not only held this



doctrine but in many cases included it in their writings and from the teacher's chair, would be to give a roster of cultivated antiquity. The long chain of culture has never lost this one important line to the present day. From Manu to Ralph Waldo Emerson it is next to impossible to find a genuine moral reformer who ignores Reincarnation or denies it.

The thread of a firm belief in Reincarnation or Rebirth has woven its long way, unbroken, from the dawn of time to the busy practical present. It has circled the globe again and again, touching nation after nation and leaving out not one. Consider, also, that it has never been upheld by the bigoted nor by the agencies of persecution, but invariably by the broadminded, the wise, the good, the mystical, the faithful, and the brave among the sons and daughters of men. Consider how the Bright Immortals have held to men's lips in age after age its Cup of Wine and Fire and men have drunk and have felt it an honor to do so.

Verily a noble those who dare throw aside preconception and prejudice and look this great truth in the face, who dare challenge the sentinel of that deep place within them where the intuition waits to give truth spontaneous confirmation. What companionship, what a legacy is theirs! Surely it is not to be left unconsidered or despised! Think! If kings or princes or the great savants of earth were to single us out for an invitation to their presence, to walk and talk with them and share their most intimate thought, would we

ignore them and turn away? Yet here we stand, in the deathless presence of the philosophers of every age, the poets mystics, and saints, their very hearts bared to our understanding, the thread of their innermost belief, their crowning intuition, almost within our very grasp, to examine, to hold and to keep—and let some ignoramus or enemy of progress pass by with a sneer, how we start guiltily, how we hide or drop this thread as though it were something to apologize for or conceal! Yet that thread, that thought, is man's spiritual birthright, a precious legacy, the dower of all nations alike, coming down to us from that higher world which sent us Manas—Man, the Thinker—in the first place; coming down therefore from that ancient day when the earth was not ridden by countless isms and sects but knew only one great body of truth, the world's ancestral Theosophy, in whose white temple Reincarnation has always been one of the great hewn stones.

Who believes it? Plato and Pythagoras pre-eminently in old Greece, with Socrates, Pindar, Eurippides, Sophocles, Epimenides, and uncounted others. Plutarch believed in Reincarnation; so did Philo Judaeus, and Josephus the great historian of the Jews; Cicero held the belief, as did the Roman Senator Longinus—these latter two inevitably, for we know that the one had been initiated into the Mysteries of Eleusis while the other had been a pupil of Hypatia. Orestes, Prefect of Alexandria, was also a pupil of Hypatia, and of a surety the great teachers of the Neo-Platonic School at Alexandria taught this doctrine: Proclus, Plotinus, Porphyry, and the martyred Hypatia herself. Vergil, too, comes to mind, for who that has not forgotten his fourth year Latin work can fail to recall the poet's description of the disembodied souls as they drink from the river Lethe to win the boon of forgetfulness before being reborn upon the earth.

Who believes? Jesus the Christ believed and taught this doctrine. He never took up the subject of Reincar-

nation as something especial and new, a topic to be introduced cautiously (as he might have to do today) and explained carefully and well. But neither did he seek to persuade men that day followed night or that houses made good shelters when it rained. There was no need, for Reincarnation was a prevailing belief not only in the Pagan but in the Jewish world of his day. And Jesus was a Jew; he had been educated in Jewish religious lore; he confounded the Doctors in the temple when a mere child, and in one of its aspects his whole mission can be considered as another link in the long chain of Jewish mystical thought. The Kabbalah, the immemorially ancient system of Jewish Theosophy, is meaningless if the Reincarnation be left out; while the Zohar, the Bible of the Kabbalists, affirms it again and again. To cite a single passage from the latter:

"Souls....must develop all the perfections, the germ of which is planted in them; and if they have not fulfilled this condition during one life, they must commence another, a third, and so forth until they have acquired the condition which fits them for reunion with God."

— E. D. Walker: *Reincarnation*

It would be difficult to make anything out of such a passage excepting Reincarnation. But returning to the immediate subject. Jesus was, in addition, probably an Essene, a member of an ascetic body of whose tenets Reincarnation was undeniably one. There is much to indicate that he spent some time in study in Egypt, also, and for aught we know to the contrary, he may have visited certain centers of instruction still farther East, and studied in these centers in which Reincarnation is one of the doctrines taught. For Jesus to have dwelt upon this as though it were an unfamiliar doctrine which needed hammering into people's minds, would have shown a bluntness of perception of which real Teachers were not guilty. Certainly he nowhere denies it, but on the contrary, there are several New Testament passages in which he refers to it as an accepted belief or truth, as for instance the one

in which he is reported to have said of John the Baptist:

"If ye are willing to receive it, this is Elijah, which is to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear".

— *Matthew*, xi, 14-15, Revised Version.

If Jesus had held the doctrine to be false, he assuredly would have said so, for many opportunities presented themselves inviting him to place the stamp of approval or disapproval upon it. Suffice it is to say, therefore, that not only did Jesus leave the then popular belief in Reincarnation undisturbed, even strengthened, but there are compelling reasons for believing that he may have given his disciples special teachings in regard to it. We know that he gave them teachings withheld from the general ear for he tells them distinctly that to them alone was it given to know the "Mysteries of the Kingdom of God," while the multitude must content themselves with parables; it is known that the ancient Schools of the Mysteries were founded to perpetuate the truths of the once universal Wisdom-Religion (Theosophy), of which Reincarnation was a basic tenet, and a comparison of Christ's teachings with the Mysteries in every age, shows them to be one and the same. What Christ's Mystery teachings were, we do not know, of course, for no shred of them has come down to us excepting in some of the apocryphal writings and in the discredited writings of the Gnostics; but archaeological research will doubtless some day throw a light upon all this, and in the meantime we ought to be able to put two and two together and use our common sense. Very much light is thrown upon this indirectly by H. P. Blavatsky, in *The Esoteric Character of the Gospels* and also in *Isis Unveiled*, especially in passages treating of the Gnostic Schools. She shows that the early Nazarenes must

be numbered as "among the Gnostic sections," all of which believed in Reincarnation; and with regard to the Fourth Gospel, she says distinctly:

"It is needless to state that the Gospel according to John was not written by John but by a Platonist or a Gnostic belonging to the Neo-Platonic School."

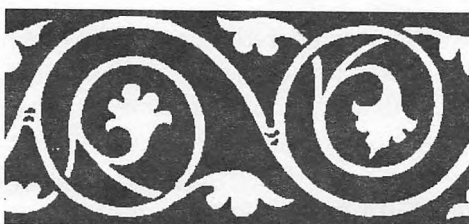
— *Isis Unveiled*, II, 91 footnote.

Which brings us back again to Plato, "the world's interpreter," and the various Platonic Schools which owed their fire to the flaming torch he brought.

The Neo-Platonic School of Alexandria has already been referred to. Centuries later we find the doctrine clearly and definitely stated by the Cambridge Platonists of the seventeenth century, among whom may be mentioned Dr. Henry More the mystic, Bishop Rust, the Reverend Joseph Glanvil, Rector of Bath and Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty, King Charles II. And before leaving the seventeenth century we must mention Dr. Thomas Burnet, who wrote in his *Telluris Theoria Sacra* (**Sacred Theory of the Earth*):

"But though we cannot certainly tell under what circumstances human souls were placed at first, yet all antiquity agrees, Oriental and Occidental, concerning their pre-existence in general, in respect of these mortal bodies....The doctrine of pre-existence and revolution (or rebirth) of souls....was very ancient and universal, if any ever was so, since it prevailed not only through all the East but also in the West...This doctrine, I say, as if sent down from heaven, without father, mother, and without any genealogy, has made its progress through the universe."

In the eighteenth century we find Reincarnation, either expressed or implied, in the writings of Kant and Jacobi, Schopenhauer, Lessing, Schleiermacher, Herder, Richter, and Goethe. Fichte, too, must be named, who described his age as one "in which morality was torn up by the roots and duty blotted out of the dictionary", and who felt, as great minds do today, the need of basic truths if the age were to be saved from itself.

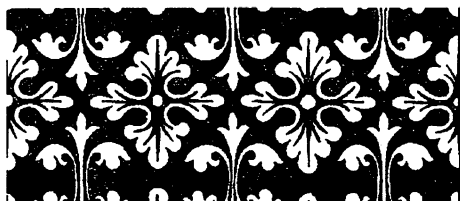


We find Reincarnation in the writings of Cousin and Constant, Victor Hugo and Beranger Lamartine could explain the strange familiarity of certain places he has visited about Jerusalem in no other way, and he once wrote:

"Almost never did I encounter a place or object the first sight of which was not to me as what I remembered. Have we lived twice or a thousand times? Is our memory simply an impression that has been obscured, which the breath of God brings out again vividly?"

Ralph Waldo Emerson Professor Hedge of Harvard, Thoreau of Walden Pond, George Ripley, Dr. Amos Bartol, Theodore Parker, A. Bronson Alcott and his daughter Louisa, have been mentioned by writers on the subject of the New England School, as believers in Reincarnation; but others may well be included here, for while we cannot, in every case, put our finger upon the doctrine of Reincarnation stated in the definite Theosophical way, yet all believed in pre-existence. That was, indeed the rock on which they split off from the modern church, just as did those brave dissenters, miscalled 'heretics,' from the church of the sixth century, and all of them fought and suffered in varying degrees for his belief.

There was William Channing, co-worker with Ripley, contributor to *The Dial*, and joint author with Emerson and James Freeman Clarke of the *Memoirs of Margaret Fuller*. There was Samuel Johnson, the deep student, penetrating and heroic; Samuel Longfellow of whom it was said, "his sermons are lyrics, his writings serene contemplations;" David A. Wasson, the poet, who so bravely defended the cause of soul in the tribunals of materialistic science; John Weiss, who won honors at Heidelberg for his understanding of Kantian philosophy; Thomas Wentworth Higginson, a born Theosophist if ever there was one, and equally at home lecturing on comparative religions, editing *Epictetus*, or fighting like a gladiator for the soul's right to opportunity. There was Converse



Francis, too, of Cambridge, among whose pupils were three of the philosophers just mentioned, Higginson, Longfellow and Johnson; and there was James Freeman Clarke, more widely known than the others although less of a 'Separatist' if one may use the term, for he was the only one of the entire group who managed to reconcile his actual philosophy of life with his calling as a theologian. Yet even he committed himself to a belief in Reincarnation, forced into it by his study of comparative religions and this in a day when the light of modern Theosophy had not dawned and the ancient light was only to be found by "strong search and by humility." In his best known book, *Ten Great Religions*, he writes:

"Evolution has a satisfactory meaning only when we admit that the soul is developed and educated by passing through many bodies."

Ralph Waldo Emerson's writings are accessible if not familiar to everyone, and so need no citation. Even where he does not definitely state his belief in the doctrine of many earth lives for the soul's experience, his writings are incomprehensible without the postulate of this conviction in the background of them. Yet he never wrote anything more beautiful or more true, mystically, than the following—taken from the journal of his brother Charles, and little known:

"The reason why Homer is to me like a dewy morning is because I too lived while Troy was, and sailed in the hollow ships of the Grecians...The rosy fingered dawn as it crimsoned the tops of Ida, the broad seashore covered with tents, the Trojan hosts in their painted armor, and the rushing chariots of Diomedes and Imogeneus—all these I too saw; my soul animated the frame of some nameless Argive...We forget that we have been

drugged by the sleepy bowl of the present."

Thoreau wrote to Ralph Waldo Emerson in 1843 in a similar vein, something that he doubtless never remembered at all in any such detail, but he chose, as an artist would do, to proclaim by making a picture the innate conviction of his soul—for that a man of such a stamp could write in such a fashion who thought Reincarnation an unholy doctrine, an invented scheme, or the vagary of a dreamer, is unthinkable. Knowing Thoreau, we know that he simply believed it, and there is nothing more to be said. To quote:

"Hawthorne, too, I remember as one with whom I sauntered in old heroic times along the banks of the Scamander and amid the ruins of chariots and heroes."

Margaret Fuller, although not stating the doctrine in so many words, is one in whose celestial map we know the rosy star existed, for without it there is no accounting for the phenomena of that spiritual galaxy of great truths which she espoused and taught. A few great thinkers there have been who failed to understand her, and small minds failed entirely; but her literary work was cut off before its prime, and we shall never know what insights that fated history of Italy may have held. But we do know that she was a philosopher of antique temper and mold; we know that her habit of mind was prophetic because it was pure, and that Time's sybil seemed, on occasions, to open her lips; we do know that she laid down her life in the end for those she loved, and that her short and deeply compassionate career was no less than an invocation. She was both mystic and philosopher.

A very little research suffices to convince one that Reincarnation was once universally believed, and we find it, even in ages when it has been more obscured, in the writings and utterances of their spiritual pioneers. It persists through all, a beautiful thematic line in the counterpoint of soul life, a thread of light and fire running

through and binding together, like beads on a string, the Theosophies of every age. As a world belief it is secure, for it rings like an immortal Voice down the corridors of all times, and onward and outward, over the whole wide earth.

And what is the objection to this tenet? Does belief in it make one immoral, selfish, cowardly, cruel, untruthful, negative, indolent, irresponsible or weak? Quite the contrary. To one who comes to hold this dignified and inspiring conviction, the personal life means something that it never meant before. Life is no longer to be dozed away or trifled with as though it were the "unsubstantial fabric of a dream." It becomes real, vital, a

magic sequence of power and choice holding within itself vast congeries of facts that are merciful-sweet to one who finds in them the Eternal Clue. And the philosophy that the world needs today is one that will fit the facts. Humanity is drifting and the compass needed is one that points unflinchingly, dependably, to the North, not one that wobbles everywhither it listeth; certainly not one whose needle has been wrenched out and thrown away.

Man is so battered an incomplete already that the need is not for doctrines to make him more so. The need is for strong, inspiring ones like Reincarnation, Karma, Cyclic Law, and the Perfectibility of Man; doctrines that

round man out spiritually, and take off his chains, and open the windows of the higher consciousness, and let in the light, and allow him — just allow him — to be as godlike and free and supernal and pure as the forgotten Divinity within him desires him to be.

Such a tenet it Reincarnation, for it challenges the Imperishable in man. Believed and understood, it brings man face to face with himself, for it invites to that self-examination and that care in conduct which are the first indispensable steps on the pathway of the spiritual life. It is a fresh, sweet breath from other and happier spheres. It makes the hardest lot endurable and the happiest sublime, with the glow of an infinite hope.

continued from page 27



the deeper recesses of the Auric Egg, which is akasic, and through which aura, when condensed by the will of one who knows how to do it, nothing material can pass. Meditate all the time; it is helpful, very helpful; and as the sound of the gong reverberates in the silence so does thought sound in the Silence.

Everyone is greatly benefited by meditating before sleep at night and before rising in the morning; the quiet, peaceful, keeping of some beautiful thought in mind, even if it is for only a quarter of an hour. Meditation before sleep helps to protect the body during sleep, if done by one who knows how to meditate, who is accustomed to meditating, and whose meditation is lofty and on sublime topics of thought; the help, the reward, is very great, and in addition usually conduces to calm and peaceful slumber.

Meditation is an inexpressible delight. It is an unspeakable pleasure, this blending of one's consciousness with something indescribable in words; this bathing in the Ocean of Light and Life, intellectually and spiritually speaking.

Meditation is an inexpressible delight. It is an unspeakable pleasure, this blending of one's consciousness with something indescribable in words; this bathing in the Ocean of Light and Life, intellectually and spiritually speaking.

Meditation consists of two things, or, perhaps better, there are two kinds of it. First, the keeping of some beautiful idea clearly in the mind as a picture, and letting one's consciousness enter into that picture; and second, the casting of the consciousness into higher spheres or planes, and taking in, absorbing, the experiences that flow into the consciousness by doing so. If you set your teeth and grip your hands and mentally hammer a subject of thought on this point and on that point, you are not meditating at all. Such thought is simply brain mind cogitation, and is often exhausting, tiring, uninspiring, and uninspired.

Meditation is the holding of a thought steady in the mind, and allowing the consciousness to work interiorly upon this thought, and the doing of it easily

and with delight. The way to meditate properly is to have a noble thought, a beautiful thought, a helpful thought, one taken from our own Order, and to hold it in the mind and make a delight out of it. Love this thought. Keep it in your mind. Let it dwell there. Let the spirit brood over it. You may even go about your business, about your professional work, about your affairs; in the meantime keeping the thought in the consciousness, and brooding over it as a mother-hen will brood over her eggs and chicks. There is no need to put the physical or psychical will on to it. If you do you won't succeed, because such exercise of the will means effort, it shows strain; and there is no way to meditate. Love a beautiful thought and keep thinking of it, keep it in the mind; this is meditation, and if you practice this simple rule of Jnana-Yoga, after a while it will become natural to you. It will become part of your daily consciousness. At times you will hardly realize that you are thinking of it. That is meditation. And concentration is simply at certain times, when you have the leisure for it, taking this thought as it were into your consciousness more clearly, and centering all your attention upon it, not with the will, but with ease.

BOOK REVIEWS

WHEN WE DIE

Geoffrey A. Farthing

Foreword by Dr. Vernan Harrison

120 pp.

Point Loma Publications 1994

The subject of death and dying has fascinated man since time immemorial. Some philosophers have even suggested that it is the introspective awareness of the paradoxical reality of death that distinguishes lower forms of life from the higher.

All great spiritual traditions advise us to contemplate death in order to ground and enrich our lives. Not to do so is as immature and foolish as to live the day without being aware of the oncoming night. Therefore, a Tibetan saying of the early Kadampa lama comments, 'Not to meditate on death at sunrise is to risk wasting our morning; not to meditate on death at noon is to risk wasting the afternoon; and not to meditate on death at sunset is to risk wasting the night.'

Also, the Buddha himself stated, 'Of all footsteps, that of the elephant is supreme. And of all contemplations, that of impermanence and death is supreme.'

We are born into a world where we bear witness to suffering but also to great joy; and we experience great despair but also great hope. Yet no matter what befalls us during our lifetime, in the end we all fall under the axe of the laws of impermanence and meet with the great lord of death. Regardless of our accomplishments or failure in this lifetime, in this one experience we are all made equal. Some die young and some old, some rich and others poor, some wise and some foolish, some with peace of mind and others in turmoil; but in the end we all meet with death.

Geoffrey A. Farthing's *When We Die* is an analysis of the teachings on the import of death as presented by the early Theosophical masters. Its prin-

cipal source is *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, a unique compendium of esoterically revealed documents transmitted from the masters Morya and Koot Hoomi to the British publisher A. P. Sinnett. Farthing also draws extensively from the writing of Mme. H. P. Blavatsky, and in particular from her works *The Key to Theosophy*, *The Collected Writings of H. P. Blavatsky* (edited by Boris de Zirkoff), *The Secret Doctrine*, and *The Theosophical Glossary*.

Not everyone today involved in Eastern mysticism appreciates the extent of the contribution that Mme. Blavatsky, Col. Olcott, W. Q. Judge, Annie Besant and the other early Theosophists made toward the deepening and internationalization of Western spiritual culture. Mme. Blavatsky's efforts in this regard were especially unique, for she was born into a European society dominated by arrogant and prejudiced colonial attitudes; she not only blatantly rejected these from within her own psychology, but in addition she single-handedly challenged the Western establishment on their own self-complacency. Armed with nothing more than her personal charisma, a profound commitment to human dignity, and an appreciation of the equality of all human life, she forced millions of her contemporaries to examine the possi-

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bility that European civilization did not possess an exclusive line on philosophical and spiritual truth; and that in fact many cultures throughout world history had arrived at equally (if not more) profound spiritual discoveries. The association that was born from her efforts, The Theosophical Society, continued her work in the generations to follow, and in fact does so today. In many ways it was Mme. Blavatsky who created the concept of the "interfaith dialogue," which today a century later has become the hallmark of enlightened religious establishment.

As G. A. Farthing points out in his introductory remarks, "Much has been said on the subject, but what in fact does happen (at the time of death) is not generally known and most of us have only vague ideas about what does or could survive death. We are even more vague about any condition there may be for the soul or whatever it is that survives death." He then refers to *The Egyptian Book of the Dead* and *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* as classics from ancient foreign cultures that deal with the subject in depth; but, as he points out, these "...are not in plain language and require considerable knowledge of their symbolism before they can have a meaning for us." He mentions Greek treatises, but points out that here again these are directed at an audience very different than that of today.

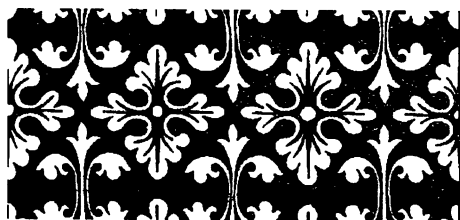
There is a wonderful analogy in Buddhism about a man pointing at the moon; his purpose is to direct people to look at the moon, but instead some of them remain looking at his finger. They do not make the transference from the symbol to the thing being symbolized. All spiritual teachings are said to be like that; words are instruments used to invoke a particular spiritual response or experi-

ence in those to be trained. As a result, every spiritual tradition uses different words and symbols to convey a sense of the death experience. It is not that some are right and others wrong; rather, each is addressing a different audience, and speaks in the language most appropriate to its listeners. It is not as much what is being said in each case that is important, but rather the chemistry that results from the encounter between the words and the minds of the listeners. Christ speaking to Middle Eastern shepherds would therefore necessarily use a far different linguistic medium than would a Hindu master speaking to fishermen on the coast of the Indian subcontinent. Words are only valuable insofar as they create a specific impact.

The terminology used by G. A. Farthing in *When We Die* is that of *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, which in turn is largely inspired by the traditions of India. (The term "Mahatma" is a Sanskrit word meaning "Great Being.") In that India has developed some of the world's most sophisticated and refined philosophical systems, this renders his presentation quite accessible to Western readers. Moreover, as many of us fail to realize, English is in fact part of the Indo-German language group spread by the Aryans who migrated to and populated large parts of both India and Europe some

four to six thousand years ago; thus the linguistic and philosophical environment of *The Mahatma Letters* is not altogether alien to a Western audience, and certainly is not as foreign as, for example, that of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. (As a translator of a dozen books from the vast library of Tibetan literature, I can say this with a clear conscience based on some degree of personal experience.)

A simple reading of *When We Die* may leave the reader with the impression that G. A. Farthing is giving us a contemporary portrait of the Hindu world view. However, this is not entirely the case, even though some of the Sanskrit terminology that appears in it is used in a Hindu sense. The majority is Sanskrit terminology which is similar to that of the *Abhidharmakosha* by the early Indian Mahayana scholar Vasubandhu. Yet it should be noted that the meaning of the Sanskrit terms are expanded and of a more symbolic meaning and 'secret' or esoteric interpretation. It is possible that Vasubandhu and Blavatsky's Mahatmas drew from a more ancient common source. Many



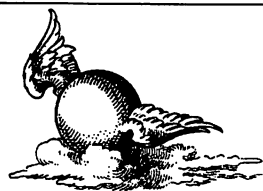
of the terms used in *The Mahatma Letters*, such as "Devachan," are of Tibetan origin (the formal Tibetan spelling of this being bDe-ba-can; pronounced Dewachen), thus indicating a Buddhist contextualization. Moreover, the purpose of the early Theosophists was not to propagate any specific tradition, be it Hindu, Buddhist or Christian, but to attempt to look within all the world's great traditions for ideas and guidelines that would be of universal significance. Thus *The Mahatma Letters* places its discussion within a Hindu-Buddhist framework, but only insofar as this conveys the message intended for a modern international audience.

The revealed teachings of Mme. Blavatsky and the early Theosophists have brought reading pleasure and spiritual benefits to millions of people since they first appeared in print almost a century ago. To my knowledge, this is the first attempt to rake through the vast repository of that literature and gather the materials related to death and dying into a single volume. G. A. Farthing is to be congratulated for his efforts in this regard. I am sure that his work will be of interest not only to modern Theosophists, but to a far larger audience.

—Glenn H. Mullin

(Glenn Mullin is a translator and author of many books on the Dalai Lamas and Tibetan Buddhism)

AROUND THE WORLD



LATVIA

A new Theosophical journal published in Russian by our Latvian friends Guido and Inguno Trepsa. Titled *Septima*, its first issue of 88 pages lists 19 standard theosophical publications by H. P. Blavatsky, W. Q. Judge, G. de Purucker. It also lists Cranston's *The Extraordinary Life and Influence of Helena Blavatsky* and Charles J. Ryan's *H. P. Blavatsky and the Theosophical Movement*.

We wish our fellow publishing friends every success spreading the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom. Address: Elizabete iela 21-a 15, Riga, LV-1010, Latvia.

MEXICO

This is the official publication (quarterly) of the Mexican Section of the Theosophical Society (Adyan). "It presents a generous variety of themes relating to the Oriental Philosophy, Science, Art of Occultism, seen in the light of the Ancient Theosophy as

brought by Madame H. P. Blavatsky, whose teachings are the basis of the Theosophical Movement today."

The Spring 1994 issue (No. 3 of Vol. I) has an unusual picture of HPB in color on its cover, and opens with the translation from *The Secret Doctrine* of her "Symbolism and Ideographs", "The Chronology of the Brahmins", "The Evolution of the Third Eye", The Gupta Vidya of the East and the Chaldean Kabala", and others, including an "Explanation of the Theosophical terms Used by H. P. Blavatsky".

A valuable periodical. Director: Carlos Lopez Cerdan Ripoll; Editors, José Ramón Sordo and Maritza Forgach. For information write to: Ignacia Mariscal, 126 Mexico, D.F.C.P., 06470 or: Apartado Postal 1026, Cuernavaca 62000, Morelos, Mexico.

THE PHILIPPINES PEACE LIBRARY AND RESEARCH CENTER

The only public library devoted to peace, open Tuesday to Sunday, 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. The Center is located at the National Headquarters of the Theosophical Society in the Philippines, 1 Iba Street, Quezon, Philippines. Tel. No. 741-57-40. Vicente R. Hao-Chin, Jr. is Chairman.

PEACE IDEAS

From the T.S. in the Philippines we have received No. 6 and No. 7 of this 8-page quarterly publication of Peace Library and Research Center. Under its title heading are the words: "If five percent of the people work for peace, there will be peace." The pages are packed with workable, often witty brief quotes and articles. Samples: "Influencing Without Intimidating", "How Young People Can Help Make Their Neighborhood Safer", "Six Paths to Peace", "Ten Commandments of Health"; "Mardening is Preventative Medicine". For further information write to Peace Ideas (above address). Subscription: US \$6.00 per year (post-paid airmail). Bulk orders are entitled to substantial discounts.



See on another of our *Eclectic* pages note about the publication of *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* from the Mahatmas M. and K. H. in chronological order, set forth in the *Reader's Guide to The Mahatma Letters* by George E. Linton and Virginia Hanson, and includes notes and comments by the latter, with new appendices that have all other known letters to A. P. Sinnett and A. O. Hume. A rare and prized offering, available also from Point Loma Publications

HOLLAND

In the Dutch June 1994 *Theosophisch Forum*, H. Kruytbosch, ed. Kwikstaartweg 33, 9765 JR Paterswolde, Holland, we read a recension of the latest book issued by Point Loma Publications/The Netherlands entitled: *De Herberg van de Witte Vogel en Andere Vertellingen* (*The White Bird's Inn and Other Tales*). It says the following:

"This nicely executed book is a Dutch translation of 24 tales by Kenneth Morris, H. P. Blavatsky and Bryan Kinnavan (pseudonym of W. Q. Judge). In the introduction it states that the tales can be found partly in published works, such as *From the Caves and Jungles of Hindustan*, a series of articles written by Mme Blavatsky for Russian periodicals about her travels in India.

Also included (from *Echoes of the Orient*) are the so-called 'Occult Tales' by William Quan Judge, a co-founder of the Theosophical Society, founded by Mme Blavatsky in New York in 1875.

"The tales by Kenneth Morris, bard, poet writer and historian from Wales, who for many years taught literature and history at the Theosophical Headquarters at Point Loma, are difficult to obtain nowadays, so that the translation-compilers have, by making his inspiring tales available to a larger public, accomplished a needed work.

"Point Loma Publications/Netherlands is a department of Point Loma Publications, U.S.A., and like the latter it is a non-profit educational organization concerned with publishing and republishing literature of a philosophi-

cal, scientific, religious, historical and cultural character. The Dutch section aims at making available to the Dutch public literature drawn from this wide field of subjects. Besides it focuses on those works especially interesting for the Dutch reader.

"In the meantime the following books have been published:

Wat de dood werkelijk is, vragen die wij allen stellen, G. de Purucker

(*What Death Really Is—Questions We All Ask*)

A subject with which most of us are not familiar, though we all are invariably involved. With closer logic and right to the point facts are exposed about universal nature, so that a bright light is shed upon this intriguing subject.

Het astrale licht, de kosmische beeldengalerij der natuur, H. T. Edge

(*The Astral Light, the Cosmic picture gallery of Nature*)

In a succinct way information is given of what is called the astral light, also described as the memory of the world or the cosmic picture gallery. It is the storehouse of nature, in which everything is stored that has taken place on the outer sphere, from forms and impressions of objects and happenings to the thoughts and deeds of men.

De wijsheid van het hart—Katherine Tingley spreekt, samengesteld en uitgegeven door W. Emmett Small

(*The Wisdom of the Heart—Katherine Tingley Speaks*, compiled and edited by W. Emmett Small)

Life and work of a forerunner and practical inaugurator of things to come, such as sound principles in education, imposing work for world peace. In her courageous coming out for moral and ethical principles she pleads for reform of prison work and abolition of the death penalty. In all those fields then considered as novelties, voices now rise seeking action for their deeper values."

Theosophia, official organ of the T. S. Germany (Adyar) some years ago published an article, "Dr. Gottfried de Purucker een Okkulte biografie" (an occult biography), by H. J. Spierenburg.

It is 8 pages and at its end the titles of G. de P's main works are given. For those reading Dutch who do not have the issue of October 1886, we can send a copy of these pages. Dr. Spierenburg, as our readers know, is the editor/compiler of important series of volumes of H. P. Blavatsky Commentaries published by Point Loma Publishing, *The Vedanta Commentaries* of which was published a little over a year ago and *H. P. Blavatsky on The Gnostics* will follow at the end of this year of 1994 or early 1995.

Jan v.d. Sluis, Rotterdam, Holland: A small group of 8 persons meets fortnightly with me studying G. de P's *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*. Each fortnight I also join the group at The Hague led by Willy Schmit. There are some 'hungry souls' there—a nice group. And once a month I visit the small group of Nicolette Gopel at Arnhem.

GERMANY

Arbeitskreis Unterlengenhardt (Berlin). Irmgard Scheithauer writes of the Convention and Summer School at Bringhausen in Spring 1994; and Elsmarie Schoppe of Paderborn writes of them: "It was a fine time for us on practical living. At Bad Harzburg a 'common Theosophical Forum' was held, and Irmgard read what her late sister Renate had prepared to give there: 'I am—I Am'. In the afternoon meeting she gave her own address, 'Feeling—Barrier or Stepping stone on the Path?'."

Die Theosophische Gesellschaft, Point Loma-Covina, (Hannover).

Barbel Ackerman, Secretary, sends word that their publishing house has now:

1. Translated *Golden Precepts* by G. de Purucker into Russian.

2. Had *Einführung in die Esoterische Philosophie* (Introduction to Esoteric Philosophy) printed in Braille.

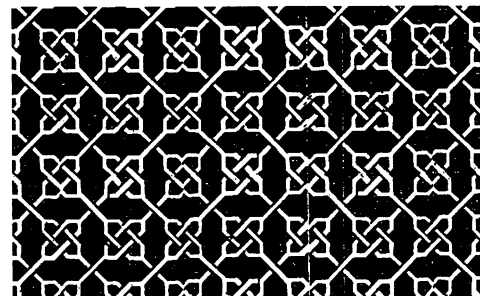
3. Printed the second volume of *Wind of the Spirit* (their German translation of our one-volume Point Loma edition is in 2 volumes). They titled their first volume *Spiritual Awakening*.

4. Brought out a second, revised edition, of the book *Geburt und Wiedergeburt* (Birth and Rebirth) in the series *The Esoteric Tradition*, also by G. de P.

5. Translated H. P. B's voluminous Lexicon into German, "investing up till now two year's intensive work. "We are now working on a very exhaustive index, which the English edition lacks. The Lexicon is an excellent complement to *The Secret Doctrine* and *Isis Unveiled*."

And Bärbel adds: "Please regard these as a donation to your research library...it is our aim not only to spread theosophical ideas in Germany, Austria, Holland and Switzerland by way of our books, but also to make them accessible for every German-speaking reader in the world...This is one of our contributions to which we have committed ourselves."

Theosophical Information Center (Frankfurt, Sandweg 108): Helga Rex writes: "Many new ideas are coming into being for our Center in Frankfurt. We are visited by newcomers, and that makes us very glad." And in an effort to clear a misunderstanding about the theosophical Hartmann group, she explains "This group is largely responsible for financially funding the new building for the Information Center. They only bought the rooms, for the aims of the Theosophical Information Center for which I am fully responsible. The Hartmann group does not make any demands on the using of the room for themselves; they only made it a condition that the rooms must be available for all Theosophical Societies and only used for theosophical matters. So it is my decision who will give a lecture, an exhibition, whose books will be presented, etc. So I am continuing my work as ever and especially for the co-working and co-operation between the various theosophical Societies, which is also, as



ever, not very easy, but it's getting better than in the past. I think the Hartmann group has set a good example for altruism."

FRANCE

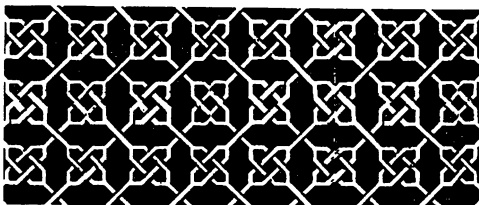
The Nature of Dream According to Occultism

In *Le Lotus Bleu*, Paris, France, May 1994 monthly issue, (The Theosophical Society, Adyar), are several pages devoted to "Sleep, Waking, and Nirvana". We give following the gist of that part titled "The Nature of Dream According to Occultism".

According to T. Subba Row, last century's illustrious Vedantin scholar, dreams are conditioned by one's state of consciousness. The waking state is called JAGRAT. The dream state is named SVAPNA. The sleep state is called SUSHUPTI. This condition of SUSHUPTI is defined in *The Theosophical Glossary* as being a state of deep sleep, and by Subba Row as a state of ecstasy.

It is not at all certain that the three brain states codified by science are identical to the three states of consciousness as viewed in Indian thought. Indeed, one finds differences: the scientific concept is horizontal whereas the Oriental is rather vertical, leading to the vast levels of one's inner being. The latter (the Oriental) conceives consciousness as manifesting in different worlds, the astral preceding the spiritual world in which the inner being has its proper existence.

In *Discussions on the Secret Doctrine* Madame Blavatsky states "what is even nowadays entirely terra incognita to science is the superior Ego's veritable dreams and actual experiences which science erroneously calls dreams and is incapable of describing properly."



U.S.A.

Encyclopedia of New Religions, Cults, and Sects.

Dr. James Santucci, Dept. of Religious Studies, California State University Fullerton, Calif., editor of *Theosophical History* (a quarterly Journal of Research), has been asked to write the entry on "Theosophy" for the projected Encyclopedia of New Religions. "This will include a short section on Organization/Membership data for each group", writes Dr. Santucci. "It is my intention to include all the Theosophical organizations (T. S., Adyar, T. S. Pasadena, U. L. T., and Halcyon. I am not certain whether Point Loma Publications is considered to be a separate Theosophical organization, but if you think it should be included together with the other groups, then I certainly will include it in the listing. If so, would you provide basic information about Point Loma Publications that you regard pertinent.") (And he sends a sample entry he had received from one

organization.)

We said we thought it would be useful to list Point Loma, and in response sent him the following lines:

"On leaving the TS headquarters of Covina, we all decided NOT to start yet "another" TS. There were already too many, and disharmony and misunderstandings were still rife. Our aim was to *live* Theosophy as we earned our livings (so-called) and to adhere strictly to the basic theosophical Teachings, co-operation among *all* theosophical groups and individuals, and do our best to disseminate the Teachings.

"Almost immediately in the 1950's in San Diego we started public lectures, and members of various theosophical groups and Societies attended, and we had some outstanding speakers.

We felt it important to keep the name "Point Loma" alive, and in certain countries of Europe—especially Holland, Germany and England—the old groups continued. Leading personnel

of course with passing years have died, but the groups continue in The Hague, Dortmund, Rotterdam (Holland), and in Berlin, with bi-monthly magazines, etc.

"We also have a branch of Point Loma Publications in the Hague, Holland, and one in Costa Rica. So though we have no "Society" we have many friends around the world who recognize what Point Loma stood for and whose work indicates that this is a living force in their own work. In fact we feel that through the nearly quarter century publication of *The Eclectic Theosophist* and the steadily growing work of publication of PLP books, we have been loyal to our original aims, and that today, as a result, Theosophists in growing numbers and of several Societies are now working more co-operatively, and also studying what can be called 'real' Theosophy. And this is a good sign for the future."

**AND OF MAGAZINES**

And now in our world-look we turn to some of the smaller currently less known independent theosophical magazines:

That these have come to birth and fill a growing interest and need in this last decade of the century is an interesting sign of the times. The following listing was planned for our Spring issue but because of lack of space had to be postponed.

THE HIGH COUNTRY THEOSOPHIST

(Published monthly, 20 pages, \$7.50 a year, by Richard Slusser, 140 S. 33rd St., Boulder Co.)

Science and Theosophy are given most interesting commentary (with quote and references in the issues this year of January, and March—articles titled "Martian Mysteries (Update)," "Science: Fractured Comet to Impact Jupiter". The February number is concerned with "The Kalachakra Ritual",

with reference first to the article in the Summer 1993 *Eclectic Theosophist* of the interview by Tibetologist and scholar Glenn Mullin with the Dali Lama at his Dharmamsala, India, headquarters, titled "The Inner Basis of World Peace". This is followed by reference to David Reigle's book "What are the Books of Kiu-Ti", with pertinent quotes therefrom.

The January HCT also gives abstracts of monthly issues from January 1987 to December 1993 (9 pages, 79 of them. For information as to price, etc., write to address above. They are all of historical import.)

Also write to *High Country* for bound copies of *Questions We All Ask* (QWAA), 52 public lectures of G. De Purucker at Point Loma October 1929/June 22, 1930 (First Series); and in Second Series 32 lectures June 30, 1930/April 5, 1931.

**PROTOGONOS**

Editor: Mark Jaqua, P.O. Box 444, Grand Rapids, Ohio 43522.

Numbers 15, of March, and No. 16 of April, have reached us with interesting reprints of articles, and some up-to-date commentary. These include: "A Vision" by Victor Endersby; "Hardened Sinners and Hardened Saints" by H. N. Stokes; "What is Truth?" by G. de Purucker; "Laws of Harmonious Living" by E. B. Szekely; "Chelas and Human Beings" by George Cardinal LeGros; review of Paul Johnson's *In Search of the Masters Behind the Occult Myth*. "Points of Interest" call pertinent attention to problems of today and thoughts thereon. This occasional newsletter, *Protogonos* is sent free of charge. Submissions and correspondence welcome. Point Loma Publications is indebted to Mark Jaqua for indexing the third volume bound *Eclectic Theosophist*, No. 1, March 1971-No. 126, Nov.-Dec. 1991.

THEOSOPHICAL REFLECTIONS

Editor, Claire Walker

("In consultation with Dr. Robert Bonnell, President of the Long Beach T.S., and with the help of members of the Lodge which handles reproduction and mailing. Address the Editor at: 14001 thunderbird 4-K, Seal Beach, CA 90740".)

The President in No. 72, February 1994, writes: "In addition to the confidence inspired in us by the intellectual endowment and spiritual dimension of our founders, we enjoy confirmations of theosophical principles from earlier sources. Over the ages, innumerable expressions in the academic, artistic, and scientific communities seem like outcroppings of the same ancient wisdom which theosophy represents." And he mentions Plato, Leibnitz, Spinoza, Thoreau, Florence Nightingale, among others; Editor Claire Walker writes of "Upheavals in California", and quotes and comments on the initial Declaration and the Principles of a Global Ethic presented at the Parliament of World Religions last year.

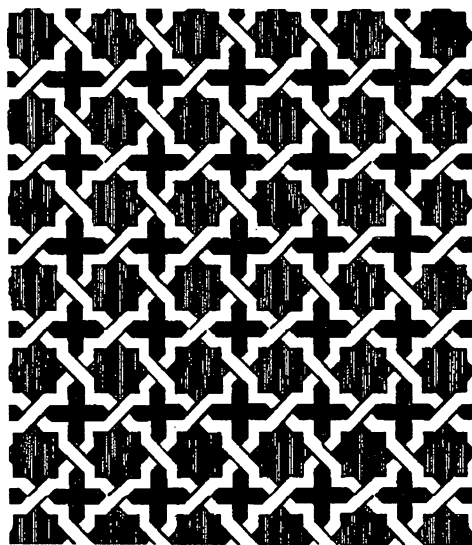


10 WAYS TO BREAK MEETING GRIDLOCK

You've been meeting for two solid days, and there's been no movement toward an agreement. In order to solve the problem at hand, you've got to break through the gridlock and get to a group consensus. What can you do? Here are ten suggestions:

Often, those with extreme views are the most vocal, while those with more moderate views don't feel as strongly and thus don't speak out. Try to coax the middle-of-the-roaders to contribute their comments.

"Don't get bogged down in details; get the group to agree on basic premises first. This provides a sense of



ANCIENT WISDOM, THE T.S. OF ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI.

The Jan/Feb. Issue reports the Seminar-Workshop conducted by Bind Escudero in January, on The Secret Doctrine. Also one conducted by Dr. John Algeo, in February on Symbolism in Masonry. Also included is Introductory Study Course in Theosophy, "Man and His Bodies." in the March/April number is an article, "The Mystical Approach" by Einar Adalsteinsson, Gen. Sec. Icelandic Section T.S.; and "Human Need in the Kali Yuga" by Radha Burnier, International President of the T.S. (Adyar).

accomplishment and evidence of a common ground from which all can ultimately make a decision.

"Divide and conquer. Sometimes groups stall out because no one is willing to take responsibility for the whole solution, and a smaller group is often better equipped to study certain issues and make recommendations to the larger group.

"Establish a trial period. If the group is unsure about a decision, agree to try it out for a short period of time.

"Ask people to submit written ideas before the meeting; then distribute them to use a springboard to the discussion.

"Hold private meetings. When an issue is very emotional or complex it may be helpful to investigate indi-

AND FROM GERMANY DER THEOSOPHISCHE PFAD

Irmgard Scheithauer, editor.

In the January/February issue: translations of: "The Dream That Never Dies" (Boris de Zirkoff); "A Touch of the Real" (Emmett Small); "We are All Arjunas" (W. Q. Judge); "The Only Way Out" (G. de Purucker); "Thoughtless Speech" (G. W. van Pelt). In the March/April issue: "Real and the Unreal" (Katherine Tingley); "Epidemics" (Dr. Lydia Ross); "Proofs of the Hidden Self" (W. Q. Judge); "Paracelsus and the Hidden Thread" (W. Emmett Small).

Theosophischer Korrespondenz—Brief

—February, the last issue with Renate Behrenback as editor; but since her death it continues under Irmgard Scheithauer, with its questions-and-answers on theosophical subjects.

Informationsblatt über Theosophie in Deutschland

Helga Rex, editor, Frankfurt am Main.

No. 27, January-April, and May-September 1994, continue with listing titles of all theosophical organizations in Germany, their places and times of meeting, and contact persons, as well as their main publications.

vidual feelings before the group meets.

"Is your group stagnating because it's the same old people' in the 'same old discussion?' Try moving to a new meeting location, adding or taking away participants, or changing the agenda.

"The root cause of your deadlocked meetings may be poorly defined issues of goals. Get the agreement of the group on the problem, write it down, and break it into sub-issues that would be easier for the group to address.

"Change the choices. This may mean going back to the drawing board and brainstorming ideas for solutions. You can then go over the list and lift out the best ones.

"If all else fails, go back to the original agenda and stick to it!

UNIVERSAL PERSPECTIVE

MEDITATION

G. de Purucker

Meditation is a positive attitude of mind. It is rather a state of consciousness than a system or a time period of intensive brain-mind thinking. Meditation implies quiet, peace; above everything else, it means quiet undisturbed reflexion. Evening tide is the best time for meditation, or perhaps the early morning at about the time of sunrise. Be alone when you meditate. Be quiet. Have no disturbing influences around you, particularly avoiding the disturbing influences of your own ever active and feverish brain mind mentality. Be positive in your attitude, but quietly so; positive as the mountain of granite, and as quiet and as peaceful. Above everything else, be impersonal. And this injunction applies with particular need to the meditation practiced in the evening. A good time for people, perhaps, to undertake this meditation period is in bed, just before sleeping.

The reason for the need of strict impersonality, without the slightest thought of any degrading, or morally offensive element intruding into the heart, such as hate, or anger, or fear, or revenge, or the other ones of the horrid progeny of the lower self, is that when meditation is impersonal and elevates the soul — when sleep steals over the body, and the ordinary, brain minded consciousness drops away, the soul is then released, and automatically follows the direction last given to it by the meditation when the brain was awake.

It is possible so to mediate before falling asleep at night that your soul ascends to the gods, and is refreshed and strengthened by its confabulations with those divine beings. It is likewise possible so to meditate — or more accurately speaking to brood — before falling asleep, that when the bonds of wakefulness are broken, and the brain mind is silenced, the soul is dragged downwards, even into the higher parts

of Avichi, and thus is degraded and weakened. Be therefore always impersonal. Have your heart filled always with impersonal love; never sleeping, never sleeping, my Brothers, until you have sincerely forgiven all injuries done unto you. This rule is very important. It is not only an elevating practice, but it is a much needed rule for your own safety. Fill your heart with thoughts of love and pity and compassion and forgiveness. Fill your mind, when meditating with some sublime, some lofty and elevating idea. Dwell on it quietly in thought. Brood upon it with the higher brooding, the impersonal brooding, which is effortless and still; and later there will be a rest of all the senses, and quiet in the mind.

Meditate all the time; it is helpful, very helpful; and as the sound of the gong reverberates in the silence so does thought sound in the Silence.

Meditation is simply the bending of the consciousness in a certain direction and holding it there. You can meditate on evil things as easily as you can on good; and, alas, many human beings do this. Meditation in the better sense is a bending of the consciousness; the elevating of the mind and the consciousness to the plane where intuition guides, and where some noble thought is native, where some great aspiration has its home and dwelling, and the holding of the consciousness in thought there. It is very easy to do, and very, very helpful. It is simply a bending of the consciousness in the direction towards which you aspire; and when you grow to love this and it becomes automatic the help that you will receive will be very great.

There is a difference between just thinking concentratedly on a subject and meditating, especially if thinking concentratedly means using the brain

mind; but if a concentration of thinking means the absorption of the consciousness in following the ennobling direction along which the spiritual will is guiding, then they are the same.

You may pass hours in meditating, and you will hardly be conscious of the passing of time. Now, this does not mean that so much time should always be spent on meditation. You may thus take away time which you owe as a duty to give to other things; and such an act would be wrong. Be sensible; be reasonable in meditation as you are in other matters.

Even in the profoundest meditation, when he has lost all sense of surrounding circumstances, the trained chela is never in the condition of having lost his spiritual and intellectual grip. He is always conscious that he is in control of the situation, is always alert, even while the consciousness is passing in review the myriad phases of the subject under meditation. It is highly inadvisable, as a general rule, to allow oneself to be on another plane in thought so greatly and fully that one becomes a psychic and physical automaton.

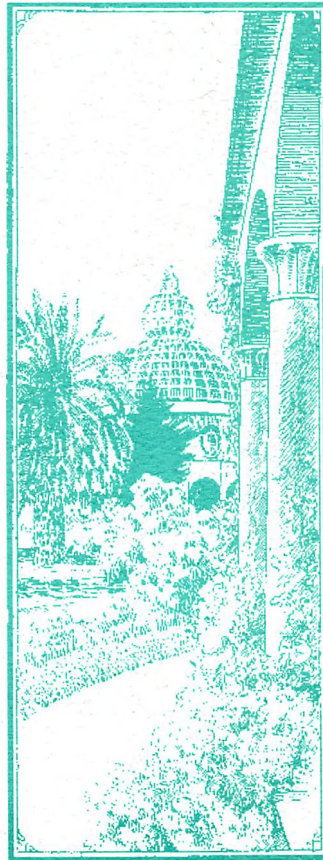
Mediate all the time. Nothing is as easy, nothing as simple, nothing so helpful. Far better is it than a set time for meditation. A set time is a rule for those who are weak. It is likewise a rule for those who are far along the path. But for most students, the better rule is: quiet thought on the questions you have in your mind; constant, unremitting, continuing even when the hands are busy in the tasks of the day; even when the mind itself is quite away or distracted by other duties, in the back of the consciousness there can still be the steady undercurrent of thought. A little practice will make this easy; and then it becomes not only easy, but a delight.

It is likewise an akasic shield, a protecting shield, in all your other affairs, for meditation surrounds the body with an aura drawn forth from

continued on page 20

*“This life, you must know
as the tiny splash of a raindrop,
A thing of beauty that disappears
even as it comes into being.*

*Therefore, set your goal.
Make use of every day and night to achieve it.”*
—Tsongkhapa



The Eclectic Theosophist is dedicated to publishing essays, studies, fiction and poetry from the Wisdom Religion that expresses the essential underlying unity of life, including philosophy, science, ethics, myth, sacred literature, and the world's religions. The “Blavatsky/Point Loma Tradition” follows a qualitative value sourced in the ancient ‘Perennial Philosophy’, re-established in the West, by H.P. Blavatsky during the Theosophic Renaissance of the latter part of the last century. Our purpose is to serve as an open forum for the ablest exponents of Theosophic insight, thought and practice from both the ancient world and current time.

